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Arafat to visit Turkey this week

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat will visit Turkey this week for talks with President Suleiman Demirel, his office announced on Sunday. Mr. Arafat will stop over in Ankara Wednesday on his way back from a one-day visit to Russia, Nabil Abu Rdaina, a top presidential aide, told AFP. Turkey is the only Muslim country among six countries due to send observers to participate in an unarmed monitoring force in the West Bank city of Hebron, which came under Palestinian rule last month. The 180-member force is to be deployed in an effort to avoid conflicts between Hebron's Palestinian majority and the small community of Jewish settlers which lives in the city centre under heavy Israeli army guard.

King condolences UAE leader

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday sent a cable to United Arab Emirates (UAE) President Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahayan, condoling him over the death of his nephew Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalid Ben Sultan Al Nahayan. The UAE announced on Sunday a 10-day mourning period and the closure of government offices for three days over the death of the sheikh. UAE officials did not specify the cause of the death of the sheikh, in his 50s.

Jordan, Iraq discuss trade ties

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Trade and Industry Ali Abul Ragheb on Sunday reviewed with Iraqi Minister of Trade Mohammed Mahdi Saleh bilateral ties. They also discussed means to develop economic relations and the procedures to implement the trade protocol signed between Jordan and Iraq.

Kinkel to visit Jordan

AMMAN (AFP) — German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel will visit Jordan March 4 for a one-day working visit before travelling on to the Palestinian autonomous areas and then Israel, the German embassy here said Sunday. Mr. Kinkel will hold talks with senior Jordanian officials on recent developments in the Arab-Israeli peace process and bilateral relations, the embassy said.

League to send observers to Algerian elections

CAIRO (AFP) — The Arab League will send observers to monitor Algerian legislative elections later this year, Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid said on Sunday. "The Arab League will take part in monitoring the next legislative elections in Algeria," Mr. Abdul Meguid said in a statement released at the Cairo headquarters of the 22-pan Arab organisation. He said he had received a message from Algerian President Liamine Zeroual asking the league to send observers to monitor the upcoming vote. Mr. Zeroual has been holding consultations with representatives of political parties in Algeria to lay the groundwork for an independent commission for monitoring elections. He has already put forward two dates for the first round of elections — May 29 and June 5 — and has urged political parties to choose between them. The Arab League had sent 43 observers to monitor the presidential elections in Algeria in 1995.

Yemen smashes counterfeit money gang

ADEN (AFP) — Yemeni authorities announced Sunday the arrests of five people on charges of printing \$18 million in counterfeit money. The two Yemenis and three foreigners whose nationalities were not disclosed were arrested last week after spending some of the counterfeit money, a senior security officer in Aden, Ahmad Muthanna, told AFP. Two false diplomatic passports were also seized from the group, he added. Several counterfeit rings have been smashed in Yemen since the civil war in 1994.

Cow carcasses a problem in Camp

AMMAN (J.T.) — A problem of cow carcasses in the Jordanian Camp is being dealt with by the Jordanian authorities.

Palestinians and Israelis resume talks in shadow of row over settlements

Thorny issues to be sorted out by committees

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli and Palestinian negotiators on Sunday resumed talks that will set the stage for Israel's next troop pullback in the West Bank. Nine committees were set up to deal with unresolved issues from the Israel-Palestinian peace agreements, including a "safe passage" to allow Palestinians to travel freely between the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the opening of a Palestinian port and airport in Gaza. Some committees will begin meeting on Monday. "Both sides have accepted as a principle... that the agreements will be honoured by each side with reciprocity, responsibility and in an atmosphere appropriate to the peace process," Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy said after the meeting at the Maale Hahamisha Kibbutz outside Jerusalem. "The principle is... total rejection of the path of violence."

The new talks come a month after the transfer of most of Hebron from Israeli to Palestinian control, under the first agreement reached between Yasser Arafat and the hardline government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. "The implementation of the Hebron accord... has led to an atmosphere of comfort and trust," said Mahmoud Abbas, Mr. Arafat's top deputy and the head of the Palestinian negotiating team. Mr. Levy noted "the good and responsible atmosphere" at Sunday's meeting. "We have undertaken to take actions that will bring the two populations closer," he said. "We live hundreds of metres apart and it can be said that we don't know each other."

The Palestinians have said they plan to raise other issues in the talks, including the amount of land



Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy (right) and Palestinian chief negotiator Mahmoud Abbas shake hands prior to the start of talks on Sunday aimed at expanding Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (Reuters photo)

Israel moves to nullify all intifada-linked claims

ISRAEL DREW UP legislation Sunday to bar thousands of Palestinians wounded by Israeli troops during the 1987-1993 intifada from receiving compensation, officials said. Drafting of the intifada injuries law was finalised Sunday at a meeting led by Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi and will be submitted soon to parliament, a ministry spokesman said. If passed into law, the legislation would cancel several hundred claims already filed by Palestinians for injuries or damages suffered during the years of unrest. A ministry official said the claims already filed amounted to more than \$300 million and that more were expected. The new legislation would reclassify the intifada from civil unrest to "acts of war" which would then fall under a 1952 Israeli law which exempts the state from paying compensation for injuries or damages caused by the army. The bill would allow for compensation only in "special humanitarian cases" to be determined by a special panel of judges. The draft legislation quickly came under attack by Palestinian officials and human rights activists. "We condemn this decision and call on the parliament and government of Israel not to approve this legislation," said Hisham Abdul Razak, an official in the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and a member of the elected Palestinian legislative council. "This is a violation of international law, which provides for the right to compensation for damages under occupation," he told AFP. Leah Tsemel, an Israeli civil rights attorney who represents several Palestinians seeking compensation, assailed the bill as a "legal device (which) is the height of hypocrisy." "Palestinians cannot be considered a population at war when they are under occupation by the Israeli army," she told AFP. Ms. Tsemel cited the cases of one family whose house was destroyed by accident when the army demolished a neighbouring building and an 11-year-old child who lost an eye after being shot by mistake. "If this bill passes, these people will no longer have a right to compensation even though the courts have already said they were victims of accidents," she said. Israel's previous Labour government also considered a law to bar compensation for intifada-related damages but backed down after the move was criticised by human rights groups.

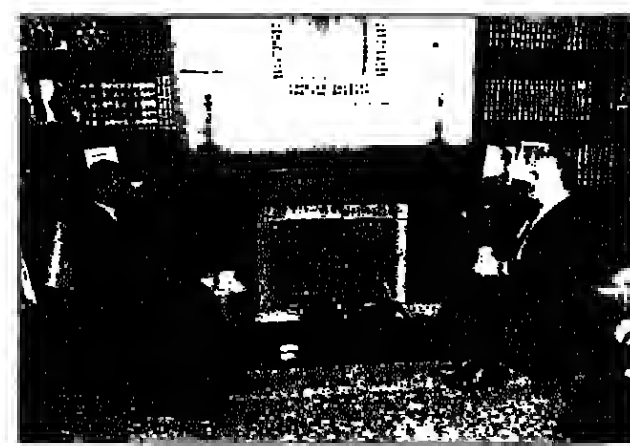
Ross to carry Netanyahu's 'new formula' to Syria — Israel radio

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has presented a new formula for rekindling peace talks with Syria to U.S. Middle East mediator Dennis Ross, who could soon take the proposal to Damascus, Israel Radio reported Sunday. Mr. Netanyahu met with Mr. Ross late Saturday in New York after talks earlier in the week in Washington with President Bill Clinton and the new U.S. secretary of state, Madeleine Albright. In their meeting, Mr. Netanyahu laid out a new "formula" for convincing Syria to resume peace negotiations which broke off a year ago, the radio said. It suggested Mr. Ross could travel soon to Damascus to present the Israeli ideas to Syrian leaders, but there was no confirmation from other sources that such a visit was in view and Mr. Netanyahu himself was cautious about the chances for a breakthrough. "The next few weeks will provide a test of Syria's willingness to enter the path of peace," he told Israel Radio on Sunday. Mr. Clinton said Thursday after meeting Mr. Netanyahu he was "hopeful" Israel and Syria could resume peace talks but he added that he had "nothing specific" to announce. Syria demands that negotiations with Mr. Netanyahu's government take into account an agreement by Israel's previous Labour administration concerning an eventual return of the Golan Heights in exchange for full peace. Mr. Netanyahu, who was elected on a platform calling for the enhancement of

(Continued on page 7)

Congolese president to visit Jordan; talks held on cooperation in transport

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Sunday received a message addressed to His Majesty King Hussein from President of Congo Pascal Lissomba. The message was delivered to the Regent by Congolese Minister of Transport Victor Tampa, who was received at a special audience at the Royal Court. Mr. Tampa briefed the Regent on his visit to Jordan which falls within the context of bolstering ties of cooperation in transport. Mr. Tampa said President Lissomba will visit Jordan next month. Earlier on Sunday, Minister of Transport Nasser Al Lawzi received Mr. Tampa and discussed with him scopes of cooperation in air and land transport to facilitate transportation of Congolese pilgrims and enhance commercial exchange. Mr. Lawzi voiced hope that a memorandum of understanding on enhancing scopes of cooperation will be reached soon. Mr. Tampa voiced hope that a twinning agreement between Aqaba and Congolese ports will be reached, saying that his country will learn from Jordan's experience in the area of training pilots at the civil aviation academy. Later Mr. Lawzi accompanied his guest to the Meteorology Department. Mr. Tampa met with the chief executive officer of



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Sunday receives Congolese Minister of Transport Victor Tampa (Petra photo)

Jordan rejects Israeli assertion over Jordanian-owned 'absentee property'

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The government on Sunday dismissed an Israeli assertion that the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty implicitly allows the Jewish state to continue to apply its "absentee property law" to properties owned by Jordanians in Israel and stressed that Jordan was determined to press for the return of Jordanian-owned properties in Israel. The comment, made by Minister of Information Marwan Muasher, came in response to a statement made by the Israeli embassy here that Jordanians' lands and houses in Israel will continue to be treated as absentee-owned properties under the 1950 Israeli absentee property law. The status of individual properties belonging to Jordanians prior to 1948 and currently under the custody of the Israeli "absentee-property guard" will neither be modified or even discussed in the final phase of the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations, the statement implied. Moreover, according to the Israeli stand, the 1994 peace treaty between Jordan and Israel does not retroactively affect the status of lands or other individual properties and tacitly provides for the maintaining of the status-quo. "In the framework of the peace treaty between the two countries, it has been agreed that there will be no change in the current status of absentee properties," a spokesperson for the Israeli embassy here said. But Dr. Muasher responded: "There is a clause in the peace treaty forbidding any discrimination (between Jordanian and Israeli citizens) and Israel's maintaining of the current status of absentee properties is a violation of this clause and, (consequently) of the peace treaty." Interviewed by telephone before leaving for Europe on an official visit, Dr. Muasher would not specify to which clause of the peace treaty he was referring. However, references to the "removal of all discriminatory barriers," can be found in article 7 on economic relations and in article 11 on good neighbourly relations. "We feel that those properties belong to Jordanians," Dr. Muasher said, and "Israel itself admits that they are not Israeli properties by calling them 'absentee-owned'."

Stressing the government's commitment to ensure a just settlement of the issue, Dr. Muasher also said that while he served as Jordan's first ambassador to Israel in 1995 the government approached the Israeli ministry of foreign affairs with an official letter calling for Israel's relinquishment of the properties under custody of the absentee-property guard to their original owners. Israel has not responded to the Jordanian government.

(Continued on page 7)

No tangible result yet of efforts to free Jordanian prisoners in Kuwait

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

Jordanians are held separate from those serving sentences on drug charges. "Since the visit, an intense effort has been launched to convince the Kuwaiti government to release all Jordanian prisoners held on political charges" — of "collaborating with the Iraqis during the occupation of Kuwait" — said one source. According to the sources, "other countries friendly to Jordan" have joined the effort. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, said Saturday after a meeting of the Council of Ministers, that Arab mediation was continuing in the affair. "The fact that the Kuwaiti government was receptive to the idea of a dialogue over the prisoners is a good sign," said the source. "The dialogue is continuing but it is too early to determine what the outcome could be."

A source who closely follows developments in Kuwait said that the government might find opposition from hardline Kuwaitis against releasing the Jordanians. "Some Kuwaitis simply reject any gestures towards Jordan and Jordanians, and it would take some time before the government would find itself comfortable enough to offer a general amnesty for Jordanian prisoners," said the source. Around 60 Jordanians are serving term in Kuwait after the State Security Court found them guilty of "collaborating" with Iraq. Some of them worked for an Iraqi newspaper during the occupation, and others, according to the charges against them, "helped the occupation army."

Justice Minister Abdul Karim Dughmi, in a television interview on Friday, expressed hope that all Jordanian prisoners in Kuwait would be released, as a

(Continued on page 7)

Musa: Israel needs lesson in peace

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa said on Sunday it was Israel rather than the Arabs that needed lessons in peace, just the opposite of what Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stated in Washington. Mr. Musa told reporters that Israel needed to be educated especially on the danger to the Middle East peace process of the Jewish state's settlements policy. He was responding to comments made last week in Washington during a visit by Mr. Netanyahu, who criticised what he said was the lack of "education for peace" in the Arab World. Mr. Netanyahu charged that Arab children still were not being taught to accept Israel as a permanent part of the Middle East landscape.

Hizbollah chief assails Clinton for 'justifying' Israeli occupation

BEIRUT (AFP) — Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, leader of the Iranian-backed Hizbollah, accused U.S. President Bill Clinton on Sunday of "justifying" Israel's occupation of South Lebanon and the Golan Heights.

"The issue has reached the point where Clinton stands up and justifies in a clear manner Israel's occupation of South Lebanon and the Golan Heights," Sheikh Nasrallah said.

"He (Clinton) is the head of a state that claims to be the guarantor of world cooperation, democracy and international laws and he is the one who sanctions Iraq, Libya and now Sudan," Sheikh Nasrallah said.

"He threatens all countries around the world with sanctions under the banner of violation of international laws while he himself stands up to violate international laws and for whom? For Israel's eyes only," he said.

Hizbollah-GIA tie suggested

PARIS (AP) — A French newspaper reported Saturday that a French envoy met with the head of the Hizbollah guerrillas in Lebanon and got help in trying to avoid attacks by Algerian militants.

The unidentified "French emissary" met with Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, secretary general of the Iranian-backed Hizbollah, the conservative magazine Le Point said in the brief report.

Without giving its sources, it quoted Sheikh Nasrallah as saying: "We had messages passed to the Algerian armed Islamic group asking it not to attack French interests."

The Algerian group, known by its French initials GIA, has claimed responsibility for bombings in France as well as attacks in Algeria, a former French colony led by a military-backed government.

A French foreign ministry spokesman said he had "no information" on the report or on whether French officials had met with Hizbollah officials in the past.

In Beirut, Hizbollah officials were not immediately available to comment on the report.

If confirmed, the report would raise questions about what links France may have with the Hizbollah, and what ties the Hizbollah may have with the GIA.

Occupied Jerusalem (AFP) — Egypt will donate the first carpets for the Marwan prayer hall which has been newly renovated beneath the Al Aqsa Mosque, Islam's third holiest site in Jerusalem's Old City, an official said Sunday.

"Jordan provided rugs for the Dome of the Rock, Saudi Arabia helped renovate the Al Aqsa Mosque, so we wanted to help out as well," said Mahmoud Karim, Egypt's representative to the Palestinian National Authority.

"I visited the Marwani and found that all it had was grass mats," he told AFP from Gaza City. He added that an expert would arrive soon from Cairo to assess the site for the Egyptian-made Oriental rug.

He said this was the first major Egyptian contribution to the Al Aqsa compound since 1967, when Israel occupied the Old City along with the rest of East Jerusalem.

Palestinian religious officials renovated the Marwan prayer hall last year, despite protests by Israel that the construction was done without a permit. It has been opened for prayers but not for tourism. The hall, also known as Solomon's Stables because it was used by the Crusaders to house horses, lies underground directly underneath the Al Aqsa Mosque.

The Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, which His Majesty King Hussein provided with new carpets last fall, are the two main mosques on the Al Aqsa compound.

Beirut reveals 5,000 years of civilisation

BEIRUT (R) — Beneath the war rubble of central Beirut, archaeologists have uncovered a 5,000-year story of successive civilisations.

Hareth Al Boustani, an archaeological adviser with Solidere, the company rebuilding central Beirut and helping to finance the digs, said 80,000 square metres had been uncovered since excavations began in 1993.

"The excavations showed Beirut was founded in 3000 B.C.," Mr. Boustani told reporters.

Layers of Canaanite, Phoenician, Hellenistic, Byzantine, Roman, Mameluke and Ottoman civilisation have been unearthed in an area where hundreds of buildings damaged in Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war have been demolished to make way for reconstruction.

Solidere, which plans to turn the 1.8-million-square metre Beirut central district into a futuristic city centre, has financed 80 per cent of the \$8 million cost of the excavations.

The main digs have finished with the exception of one field, Mr. Boustani said.

"The area still being excavated is where the (Roman) law school may be located," he said during a briefing by Solidere officials on the progress of reconstruction.

Discovery of the Law school of Berytus, the most prominent in the Roman empire before the city was destroyed in A.D. 551 by an earthquake would be an archaeological dream come true.

Mr. Boustani said further digs would be carried out in parts of the city centre not scheduled for construction and in plots where ruins were unearthed during construction.

"The excavations will continue but we cannot do systematic digs like in areas outside cities," he told Reuters.

"If any ruins are found in a piece of land that is being prepared for construction, then archaeological teams will excavate before the construction continues," he said.

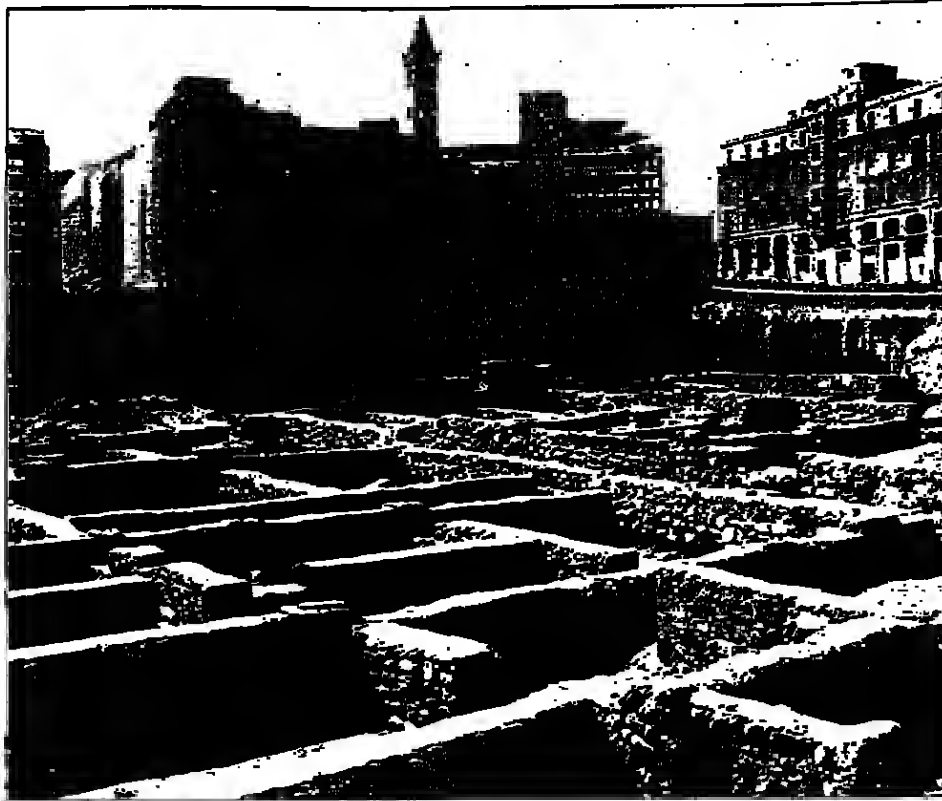
He said six sites had been deemed worth preserving by the experts, who include archaeologists and scientists from the universities of Paris, Nice, Amsterdam, Tubingen and Berlin, and London Museum as well as groups from Italy, Australia and the Czech Republic.

Dr. Boustani said the Lebanese Ministry of Culture, which supervises the digs with the General Directorate of Antiquities, had decided to keep sites such as a Canaanite hill and the Phoenician quarter in their original place.

Three other sites — the Hellenistic quarter, the Byzantine commercial site and some Roman ruins — would be dismantled and rebuilt.

"Solidere has taken the responsibility to repair and beautify the Roman baths... this whole area will become a Roman-style public garden," he added.

Cardomaximus, the main street of Roman Beirut, would most likely be repaired and preserved, Mr. Boustani said. Some 2,500 square metres of mosaics found in excavations will be restored and re-installed in the covered market, which are scheduled to be rebuilt next year.



A general view on Sunday of the remains of the Phoenician city which was uncovered by archaeologists digging in Beirut over the last 18 months (Reuters photo)

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Banks which fix interest rates closer to Islam, Tantawi rules

CAIRO (AFP) — The head of Al Azhar, the top Sunni Muslim authority, has said in statements published Sunday that banks which fix interest rates in advance are the closest to Islamic anti-usury principles.

"Not all bank interests are either halal or haram," Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Tantawi told the London-based Arab daily Al Hayat.

"But banks which fix interest rates ahead of time are the closest to Islam," he said.

Sheikh Tantawi said that the notion of legal and illegal must be decided case by case. "If you give your money to someone who needs it to pay a debt it is

not right for you in this case to make a profit on this money," he said.

"But if you give your money to someone in trust, be it a bank or someone else, you must pay him a fee to protect this money," he said. "And if you place your money with someone as an investment and afterwards he fixes an interest rate or a profit this procedure is halal," he added.

Sheikh Tantawi said he would visit London in May in response to an invitation from the British government and could at that time meet Prince Charles, whom he praised for his call to launch a dialogue between Muslims and the West.

Working-class district of Cairo, it said.

Meanwhile, police jailed a young man accused of killing his cousin after he tried to rape her because she had aroused him by wearing jeans, the government press reported Sunday.

Women have begun wearing pants in Egypt in recent years, although previously women who appeared in trousers in public were thought to be prostitutes.

Hanem Mohammad Ismail initially told police that her daughter Mona Youmna, 21, whom she said was secretly married to a neighbour, committed suicide by dousing herself with kerosene, Al Ahram newspaper said.

"But Ismail later admitted that she poured kerosene on her daughter and set her on fire out of fear that her husband would divorce her because she wore trousers," Al Ahram said.

The incident occurred on Saturday in Khaila, a working-class district of Cairo, it said.

He tried to kiss her but she defended herself by threatening him with a kitchen knife, Dassaqui overpowered her and dragged her to the living room to rape her but when she screamed for help he strangled her, the daily said.

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New York City screeches to a halt for Netanyahu

NEW YORK (R) — Eight blocks of prime midtown Manhattan real estate were closed off to New Yorkers on Saturday as a security measure, so Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu could walk to a synagogue for morning services.

Helicopters hovered overhead and orange sanitation trucks filled with tonnes of salt took up positions at every street corner along the route as Mr. Netanyahu walked from his Essex House Hotel room on Central Park South to the fifth avenue synagogue on East 62nd street between Fifth and Madison Avenues.

The heavy trucks were used as barricades at intersections.

"Where's the parade? What time does the parade start? And why all the security?" spectators asked. The eight blocks from hotel to synagogue looked like a ghost town.

Security was so tight pedestrians were not permitted to cross Fifth Avenue into the park or to walk along Central Park South until Mr. Netanyahu reached his destination. Guests at other hotels

along the route including the Pierre and Sherry Netherland were sidelined until after Mr. Netanyahu had left the area.

Mr. Netanyahu, 51, his wife Sara arrived at the synagogue about 10:40 a.m. EST (1540 GMT). Wearing a prayer shawl, Mr. Netanyahu sat in the second row, next to the president of the synagogue.

In a brief speech Mr. Netanyahu invited everyone in the congregation to Israel to celebrate his country's 50th anniversary as a nation next year. He also reiterated his plans to invite Pope John Paul II to the anniversary.

He got a laugh when he told the congregation his walk to the synagogue that was devoid of cars and people was "a miracle." Before leaving, he was given a blessing by the synagogue's cantor and presented with a ceremonial wine cup and bible.

His wife, wearing a two-piece black suit and matching hat, sat two floors above her husband, next to Israeli Consul-General Colette Avital with the other women in the congregation.

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Indian officials shopping for Israeli arms, newspaper says

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Senior Indian defence officials have visited Israeli defence plants to look into the possibility of signing a major weapons deal, the Jerusalem Post newspaper reported on Sunday.

Citing Israeli defence industry sources, the English-language newspaper said Defence Secretary T.K. Banerji headed one mission to the country last week to inspect electronics and radar systems.

A defence ministry spokesman confirmed that the Indian defence officials visited Israel, but declined to provide any details, referring all queries to the Indian embassy.

Indian embassy officials were not immediately available for comment.

In December, India and Israel signed cooperation agreements in several fields, including technological research and development, and the Jerusalem Post quoted a senior Israeli defence source as saying the two countries were expected to sign some military purchase contracts this

year.

That deal followed an unpublished trip to Israel in June by the chief scientist in India's defence ministry, A.P. Abdul Kalam, to look into Israel's missile and satellite programmes, the Jerusalem Post reported.

Defence industry officials told the newspaper that Israeli firms were bidding for several major Indian contracts, including to upgrade several hundred T-72 tanks with advanced fire-control systems.

Last year Israel Aircraft Industries, the country's top defence contractor, announced the sale of Super Dvora Mark II high-speed attack boats to the Indian navy.

Indo-Israeli ties got a boost a month ago when Israeli President Ezer Weizman made the first official visit by an Israeli head of state.

Mr. Weizman offered to sell Israel's latest Kfir fighter jets to India and said he was confident of close cooperation between the two air forces.

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15 dead, 40 wounded in fighting in Mogadishu

MOGADISHU (R) — Fighting in Mogadishu last week between rival Somali factions killed at least 15 people and wounded 40, residents said on Sunday.

The victims included five people from one family — a man, his wife, his son, his brother and his mother-in-law — who all died when a mortar shell landed on their house in south Mogadishu.

During the fighting, which continued until Saturday, two mortar rounds landed on the former Somali presidential palace, now used by warlord Hussein Mohammad Aidede.

But no casualties were reported from the palace.

Supporters of Mr. Aidede and rival warlord Ali Mahdi Mohammad accused each other of starting the fighting, which began after a technical — a makeshift armoured vehicle — ran over a landmine.

The area was calm on Sunday.

A prominent Muslim leader, Sheikh Ali Mahdi Mahamoud, told reporters for an attack on his followers at Shibis, north Mogadishu, last Wednesday.

He said Mr. Ali Mahdi resented his (Mahamoud's) strong influence in the area.

Asked about the incident, Mr. Ali Mahdi told reporters he was not behind the attack on the sheikh's followers.

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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Deserts 03/21
Jordan Valley 09/24

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 19, Aqaba 23 Humidity
readings: Amman 27 per cent,
Aqaba 30 per cent.

USEFUL
TELEPHONE
NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Wafiq Qaddoumi 893542
Dr. Bahjat Bader 832642
Dr. Naser Ibrahim 830432
Dr. Mohammad Al-Ghoul 790730
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Naironkh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Naironkh pharmacy 847632
IRBID:
Dr. Ghazi Tammeh 250080
Al Quds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Waleed Nabhan 995743
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES
Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 611111
Civil Defence immediate rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Dept. 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water & Sewage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
J. Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Co. 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITAL
AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity 644281/6
Akileh Maternity 644412/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669321
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir 775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikmah Modern Hospital (09)990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272775
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)914111

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA
INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORT
This information is supplied by
Royal Jordanian (RJ) information
department at the Queen
Alia International Airport Tel.

(08)53200-5, where it should
always be verified.
Information on other flights
are supplied on phone 08
(527001)

ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
07:15 Sanaa (RJ)
08:20 Jeddah (add) (RJ)
08:35 Jeddah (RJ)
08:55 Damascus (RJ)
09:45 New Delhi (RJ)
09:50 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:00 Jeddah (add) (RJ)
10:05 Beirut (RJ)
16:20 Cairo (RJ)
16:25 London (RJ)
16:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
20:35 Tunis (add) (RJ)
22:20 Casablanca (RJ)
01:00 Jakarta, Bangkok (RJ)
03:40 Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)

Other Flights
05:45 Khartoum (SD)
09:30 Cairo (MS)
12:00 Doha (Q7)
12:40 Bahrain (GF)
15:05 Vienna (OS)
21:00 Paris, Damascus (AF)
21:40 Tel Aviv (LY)
22:45 Athens, Beirut (OA)
00:30 London, Damascus (BA)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
06:20 Beirut (RJ)
09:50

Home News

Japan grants \$72,318 for projects in Karak

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Japanese government Sunday allocated assistance worth an estimated \$72,318 for two projects in the Karak.

Governor, according to an Embassy of Japan statement.

One of the projects is the provision of a water tank truck for the Muab Municipality and the other is directed to the Karak Qasaba Educational Department that they might improve public school libraries, the statement said.

The Muab Municipality plans to provide water more frequently and as it contains no well in the city, water must be brought from a well 36 kilometres east of the city and the water can only be provided once a week, the statement said.

As residents of the area have been suffering from a continuous shortage of water, the Japanese government decided to provide a water tank truck worth \$45,056 and the truck is expected to provide more frequent deliveries of water to a wider area.

This contract was signed at the Embassy of Japan between Mayor of the Muab Municipality Mahmoud Tarawneh and Ambassador of Japan to Jordan Takayuki Kimura, the statement said.

The second project will fall under the auspices of the Karak Qasaba Educational Department as a project to improve public school libraries in the region, according to the statement.

The libraries of 11 selected schools have now a total of 18,498 books, a number which has been judged to be insufficient for the student population. Therefore, the Japanese government has decided to provide a grant of \$27,262 for the purchase of books and furniture for these libraries.

This contract was also signed at the Embassy of Japan between Director of Karak Qasaba Educational Department Abdul Rahman Ma'ayta and Mr. Kimura.

These grants are provided within the framework of the Japanese Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects (GAGP), the statement said.

GAGP is mainly extended to non-governmental organisations (NGOs), research institutes, hospitals and local governments, with emphasis on such areas as primary health care, poverty relief, basic job training, women in development, environment, primary education and assistance to the disabled.

Both Mr. Tarawneh and Mr. Ma'ayta voiced appreciation for the generous contributions.

Through GAGP, Japan has thus far donated \$1,572,680 to Jordan. The GAGP grants for the fiscal year of 1996 (April 1996-March 1997) to Jordan is expected to reach \$700,000, including this assistance, the statement said.

Minister warns engineers away from projected strike

AMMAN (J.T.) — Responding to notices in the daily newspapers Sunday calling on all engineers to strike on Feb. 22, Minister of Public Works and Housing Abdul Hadi Majali described the projected strike as an "escalation" and an "unjustifiable and unacceptable step" at this stage.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Mr. Majali said that all outstanding issues can and should be resolved through dialogue and not through strikes which, he said, serve no purpose and only complicate matters.

Referring to a memorandum of understanding which the government previously concluded with the Jordan Engineers Association (JEA), the minister said that the government has fulfilled its obligations and that a series of measures and amendments to existing regulations are still underway.

The JEA called for a sit-in in front of the Ministry of Public Works from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in support of public sector engineers who are demanding a 180 per cent allowance up from 90 to 120 per cent as suggested by the government.

Mr. Majali maintained that any strike would prompt the government to no longer consider itself bound to any agreement with the JEA and that the government might resort to "suitable measures" to prevent any additional strikes.

YMWA to host open house tomorrow

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Young Muslim Women's Association (YMWA) Centre for Special Education will hold an open house tomorrow at its centre in Benayut, south of Amman, in order to give the Jordanian public an insight into its services for handicapped children.

A centre official told the Jordan Times Sunday that the open house will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and is organised to mark the 25th anniversary of the YMWA, a charitable voluntary organisation chaired by HRH Princess Sarvath Al Hassan.

Visitors to the centre, specialised in providing education and vocational training for the mentally handicapped, will be able to watch trainees at work and visit to the YMWA's

sheltered workshop, located at Sahab Industrial City, the official said.

Those visiting will receive transport by buses departing from the Amra Hotel in Amman, she said.

The centre offers training to children between three and eighteen years of age through teachers provided by the Ministry of Education and the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC), the official said.

A total of 200 children are training in ceramics, weaving and knitting, woodwork and agriculture at the centre and after acquiring good vocational skills they work either at the "sheltered workshop" at Sahab Industrial City or in Jordanian businesses and factories, she added.

This sheltered workshop produces a variety of prod-

ucts, marketed in Jordan through its showroom in the Wadi Saqra district of Amman or directly through contacts with both public and private institutions, she said.

A total of 45 workers, referred from the centre, are currently employed at the sheltered workshop and the Ministry of Education has been the main purchaser of the workshop's products, which the official described as mainly woodwork.

She added that the services of the YMWA training centre are financed by local donors in addition to annual financial assistance from the ministries of education and social develop-

Ensour pledges action against purported 'excesses'

By Maria Bizri
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Addressing the Lower House of Parliament Sunday, Minister of Higher Education and Acting Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour stressed that the government will investigate any information it receives regarding government employee "excesses" reported by deputies and will deal firmly with transgressors.

Responding to several deputy remarks during yesterday's session, presided over by Speaker Saad Hayel Srour, Dr. Ensour stated that deputies have the constitutional right to demand information if they suspect violations. He added that anyone attempting to conceal or withhold information will be held accountable for such.

He then mentioned the 600 underprivileged students who have benefited from government-sponsored university grants. Dr. Ensour stated that the fact that no complaints had been made regarding the grants served as proof of the fairness of the selection process.

Minister of Health Aref Butaineh described an agreement signed between the ministry and Royal Medical Centres, stating that all military personnel retired and active may use these health centres and hospitals anywhere in the Kingdom. He added that military personnel from the Karak and Irbid areas will be treated at the Karak Military Hospital and the Irbid Military Hospital.

Deputy Anis Zaib reminded the government of the agreement signed between the Jordan Electricity Company and its employees and demanded that the government stand by its promise.

In response, Minister of Labour Abdul Hafez Shakhanbeh stressed that the government would honour the agreement and stated that the rights of the company's workers would be protected. He added that the government was committed to maintaining a balanced relationship between company workers and owners.

Other deputies brought up issues of general concern including health services, communication services and road conditions.

Supreme Court overrules government refusal of licence for weekly newspaper

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A government decision taken last year declining a licence to the weekly newspaper, Al Mithaq, was overruled Saturday by the Supreme Court, and publishers of the weekly announced plans to launch the newspaper next month.

"We are pleased with the court decision and have already initiated necessary primary procedures," said Sultan Hattar, the newspaper's lawyer, and one of its shareholders. "Hopefully by next month we will have our first issue on the newsstands."

Al Mithaq Press and Publication Company (WPPC) filed a licence request for the newspaper to the Council of Ministers in July of 1996. Two months later, the Cabinet rejected their request and refused to issue a licence for the newly established Al Mithaq.

According to Attorney Hattar, the Cabinet justified its refusal as due to the name of the newspaper. "The Cabinet stated the name of the newspaper should not diverge from the company name of Al Mithaq," Mr. Hattar said.

He added that the company chose a different name as a newspaper already existed with the

name "Al Mithaq." The Supreme Court was headed by Justices Fuhed Abu Adham, Mashour Oqla, Hisham Alian, Farah Rabadi and Zuhair Murad.

The attorney told the Jordan Times Sunday that the newspaper will tackle social issues such as people's quotidian concerns as well as the environment, unemployment, issues relating to distinct governorates and rural areas.

He added that the newspaper will reflect an Arab identity and history as well as "current political circumstances."

Previous to the Cabinet decision, Al Mithaq was in partial operations, awaiting the issuance of a licence, by Nahed Hattar, a columnist for the weekly tabloid Shihaan and journalist Abdullah Abu Ruman, who are both currently standing trial at the State Security Court on charges of lese majeste.

According to the State Prosecution charge sheet, Mr. Abu Ruman was arrested by authorities in August of 1996, while Mr. Hattar evaded arrest and went into hiding shortly after police raided Al Mithaq office. Mr. Hattar was detained in October.

Mr. Hattar and Mr. Abu Ruman maintained the office in Amman to launch the weekly. Documents seized by

police during the raid include originals of articles believed to be the basis for the lese majeste charges.

Both journalists were later freed on bail.

Mr. Hattar, 37, is accused of distributing slanderous articles while Mr. Abu Ruman, 23, is charged with verbal slander.

The charges against the two journalists stem from articles they allegedly wrote during and after the unrest in the south, following a government decision in mid-August to lift bread subsidies on wheat and animal feed and replace the subsidy system with direct cash compensation.

The two are currently being interrogated by Salt Prosecutor Abdul Halim Hiari on six additional charges, which include propagating material which undermines national unity and relations between Jordan and Palestine, sowing sectarianism and racialism, instigating violence, terror and hatred.

Women still claim less access to education, resources — survey

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Notwithstanding efforts exerted by the governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), Jordanian women still suffer less access to education and economic resources than their male counterparts, a recent Department of Statistics survey showed.

The survey was divided into three parts: household; maternal and child care; and individuals.

Under the household section, males and females 15 years and over responded to questions regarding their education.

Responses showed that 15.3 per cent of males did not complete their elementary education while 26.3 per cent of women fell into the same category.

Conducted in the first half of 1996 with the participation of 6,000 households and more than

37,000 individuals throughout the Kingdom, the survey revealed that 8.6 per cent of men completed the Tawjihi or equivalent, while only 3.6 per cent of women hold the same degree.

Among this survey, holders of doctorate and masters degrees were divided respectively: 0.4 and 0.6 per cent for men and zero and 0.2 per cent for women.

With less access to education than men, women also appear to have relatively little financial independence and their access to economic resources seems tied to family or marriage.

Of the surveyed women, 61.5 per cent are homemakers, while the others are: students, 16.7 per cent; with means, 0.2 per cent; disabled, 2.3 per cent; retired, 0.2 per cent; and others, 3.7 per cent.

The employment rate among Jordanian women appears particularly low

when compared with that in industrialised countries.

According to 1996 figures conducted by the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat), women constitute 41.4 per cent of the labour force in European countries.

Nonetheless, as most Jordanian women work as homemakers, which, for the purposes of the survey was considered a form of employment, unemployment among them was much lower than among men, totalling 4.3 per cent as opposed to 10.9 per cent among men.

Questioned about their freedom of movement (unaccompanied) outside the home, more than half of the women in the survey, 52 per cent, said they would not be permitted to go abroad alone to study. And 2.6 per cent of the women responded that they are not allowed to pay visits to their neigh-

bours on their own. Still 2.3 per cent responded that they are forbidden from going to the local market alone.

"Results of the survey would appear to support the premise that many aspects of women's lives in Jordan are determined by traditional values."

When questioned about the adoption of "developed countries' lifestyle in Arab countries," 82.2 per cent of the women selected declared they were against it.

The survey also canvassed the women respondents on their contraceptive practices.

Of the married women not pregnant at the time of the survey and aged from 15 to 54, 23.8 per cent said they do not practise any contraception, while 12.1 per cent practised oral contraceptives, 30.8 per cent are fitted with an intra-uterine device (IUD), 1.8 per cent said their husbands use condoms, 5.5 per cent have

had a tubal ligation.

Natural methods of contraception seem to be still largely used by Jordanian women: 9.3 per cent declared they practise periodic abstinence, 8.9 per cent prolonged breast feeding, and 5.3 per cent practised coitus interruptus.

As for child birth, 13.2 per cent of the mothers interviewed said they had given birth to their last child at home, 57.4 per cent in government hospitals and 28.2 per cent in private hospitals.

The survey was conducted in collaboration with the Norwegian Institute for Applied Social Science (FAFO), and sponsored by the United Nations' Children Fund (UNICEF) and the Canadian International Research Centre (IDRC).

NEWS IN BRIEF

Kingdom basks in warm spell

AMMAN (Petra) — The Kingdom will continue to enjoy a warm air mass, centred over West Cyprus, leading to a rise in temperature, according to Department of Meteorology sources. They predicted a gradual drop in temperature for Tuesday and Wednesday with ensuing rain showers.

RSCN meets with Saudi delegation

AMMAN (Petra) — President of the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) Anis Muasher Sunday met with a delegation representing the Saudi Corporation for the Conservation of Wildlife. The two discussed cooperation and the returning of endangered species to their original habitats. Dr. Muasher briefed the Saudi delegation on Jordanian achievements in wildlife protection, culminating in the establishment of a network of wild life reserves. The Saudi delegation arrived here on a five-day visit to Jordan during which they will study the Jordanian experience in establishing specialised wildlife societies.

Committee to discuss population strategy

AMMAN (Petra) — The National Population Committee and the Parliamentary Committee on Population and Development, headed by Labour Minister Abdul Hafez Shakhanbeh Wednesday will convene with the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF) to discuss means of implementing the national strategy on population, endorsed by the Cabinet last March.

Registration opens for elections in new municipalities

AMMAN (Petra) — Registration opened Sunday for candidates running in local elections in 27 newly-formed municipalities in eight of the Kingdom's governorates.

Candidate registration for the Feb. 26 elections will last for three days in the new municipalities located in the governorates of Amman, Irbid, Mafrqa, Ajloun, Balqa, Jerash, Tafleh, and Madaba, according to the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment.

The ministry stated that these municipalities have been upgraded from the status of village councils through a Council of Ministers' decision taken in 1995.

Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Abdul Razzak Tubeishat announced that his ministry is planning to merge many adjacent municipalities into bigger ones, to which will be added neighbouring village councils, before the July 1999 national municipal elections.

In its Saturday cabinet session, the government

decided to annul 78 village councils which are now slated to join municipalities.

Mr. Tubeishat said that 213 village councils are now linked with municipalities.

A 1995 government decision stipulated that Jordan have only 50 large municipalities as larger municipalities will be in a better financial position to implement municipal services, the minister said.

Regarding the existing 400 village councils, Mr. Tubeishat affirmed that 95 per cent receive an annual JD500 from the government, which, he said, barely covers their expenses and they often must resort to borrowing from the Cities and Villages Development Bank.

By merging municipalities, local councils will command better control over agricultural lands and be in a better position to prevent disorganised building operations, the minister said.

They will also be able to collect fees for services from local communities, he added.

What's Going On

FILM

* "Poussiere d'ange" at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh at 8:30 p.m.

GERMAN FILM WEEK

* "Die Leidenschaftlichen" (The Passionates) (in German with English subtitles) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 7:00 p.m.

LECTURE

* "Works in Progress and Perspective in the Sanctuary of Artemis in Jerash" at the Friends of Archaeology Centre at 6:30 p.m.

OPEN DAY

* Open day at the Young Muslim Women Association Centre for Special Education and sheltered workshop at the Amman Industrial Estate in Sahab on Tuesday 19:00 a.m. — 1:00 p.m.)

EXHIBITIONS

* Works by artist Amanda Shehadeh at the French Cultural Centre, until March 6.

* Display of Jordan River Designs Products, Jabal Amman (Tel. 613081/2) until Feb. 28.

* Art exhibition by Najiha Salim at Orient Gallery, Isam Ajlouni St., Shmeisani, until Feb. 28.

* Bani Hamida exhibition/sale of handicrafts (rugs, cushions, runners, and wall-hangings, Jabal Amman (Tel. 658696/7), until Feb. 28.

* Works by contemporary Arab artists entitled "The New Collection" at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, (Tel. 643251/2), until Feb. 27.

S. Korea lashes out North for shooting of defector

SEOUL. (Agencies) — South Korean cabinet ministers accused North Korea Sunday of trying to kill a prominent defector in the South and ordered tighter security for defectors and government leaders.

Home Affairs Minister Suh Chung-Hwa denounced the shooting of Li Il-Nam, the nephew of North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il's ex-wife, as "an assassination attempt by North Korean infiltrators," a government statement said.

Prime Minister Lee Soo-Sung said a desperate North Korea appeared to be resorting to terrorist attacks after a high-level Pyongyang official sought political asylum in South Korea. He is now stranded in the South Korean mission in China.

"With the shooting incident, North Korea took specific steps of retaliation it had talked about since Hwang Jang-Yop's defection," he told a meeting of security-related ministers.

He called the meeting as Mr. Li went into coma after being shot late Saturday outside his home just south of Seoul.

"The meeting agreed to step up checks and search for the arrest of the culprits and strengthen security for North Korean defectors, senior government figures and political leaders," the statement issued after the emergency meeting said.

South Korean officials said Pyongyang might stage more attacks as a warning to both Seoul and to potential asylum-seekers.

South Korea placed all its police forces on full alert, while troops searched for the gunmen, they said.

Tensions on the divided Korean peninsula have flared since Wednesday, when Hwang Jang-Yop, a senior adviser to North Korean leader Kim, arrived by taxi at the diplomatic mission in China.

Hwang, ranked 24th in the Stalinist states hierarchy, would be the highest Pyongyang figure to seek asylum in the South.

But furious North Korean officials waiting outside claimed Mr. Hwang was kidnapped and warned that Pyongyang would respond with force if the South compelled Mr. Hwang to go to Seoul.

Senior Superintendent Kim Choong-Nam, heading a police probe into the shooting, said Mr. Li relied on a life support system.

"We have several clues for the case pointing to North Korea," he told Reuters. Mr. Li, 36, known in South Korea as Lee Han-Yong, is the nephew of Sung Hye-Rim, former wife of Kim Jong-Il, who celebrated his 55th birthday Sunday.

"Li told witnesses 'spy, spy' before he went unconscious," the police officer said. The gunmen used Belgian-made Browning pistols that have been frequently used by North Korean spies for attacks in the past, he added.

Doctors at a nearby hospital said surgery on Mr. Li could not remove a bullet in his head as it was too deeply lodged.

Police said neighbour Park Chong-Un briefly talked to Mr. Li as he lay outside his apartment before reporting the shooting to police. Mr. Park and Nam Sang-Hwa, who lived in the same apartment as Mr. Li, witnessed the attack through video-monitoring devices from their homes.

Police believed the attackers used silencers, as neighbours heard no gunshots. An analysis of two used cartridges at the scene showed the weapons used were Browning pistols.

The attack occurred as China agonised over the fate of Mr. Hwang, a member of the powerful secretariat of the Communist Party.

Allowing Mr. Hwang to go to Seoul, where he could be expected to reveal crucial secrets about the North, would offend Beijing's old Communist comrades. Sending him back to Pyongyang would endanger China's ties with its new capitalist friend, which has already proved a valuable investor.

Mr. Hwang's apparent betrayal dealt a severe blow to North Korea already reeling from food shortages and economic disasters.

Mr. Li came to Seoul in 1982 from Europe where he had been studying. He is the first Northern defector to be shot in the South since the arch-rivals fought the 1950-53 Korean War.

Meanwhile, North Korean diplomats and others drafted to watch the South Korean embassy in Beijing warned Sunday of violent action if Mr. Hwang was moved.

Insisting Mr. Hwang had in fact been kidnapped by Seoul agents, they also challenged South Korea to let him make a public declaration confirming his intention to defect.

"If Hwang is not returned very soon, we will not be responsible for the consequences," said one North Korean embassy official, who refused to be identified.

"The responsibility for any incident would lie with the South."

"As you in the West know, when we say we will do something we stick by our words," he added, speaking hours after another defector was critically wounded in Seoul.

A more explicit threat came from a North Korean journalist recruited into the embassy surveillance team.

"If they have used violence, then we will have to use violence," said the journalist, who identified himself only as Lee.

Mr. Lee was one of scores of North Korean nationals who have maintained a round-the-clock vigil outside the embassy's consular section, where Mr. Hwang, 73, and his aide have been holed up since Wednesday. "I am indignant that such a big scholar has been kidnapped," Mr. Lee said, refusing to believe Mr. Hwang had defected of his own free will.

"Something is missing and we want to know the truth from his own mouth. We want to hear his voice."

A North Korean student roped into the Beijing monitoring team echoed the warnings of possible retaliation over Mr. Hwang's case.

"If Hwang goes to Seoul we will have to react," the Beijing Foreign Languages University student told AFP.

When asked if violence would be used, he said this would depend on whether Hwang Jang-Yop had been kidnapped or had defected of his own accord.

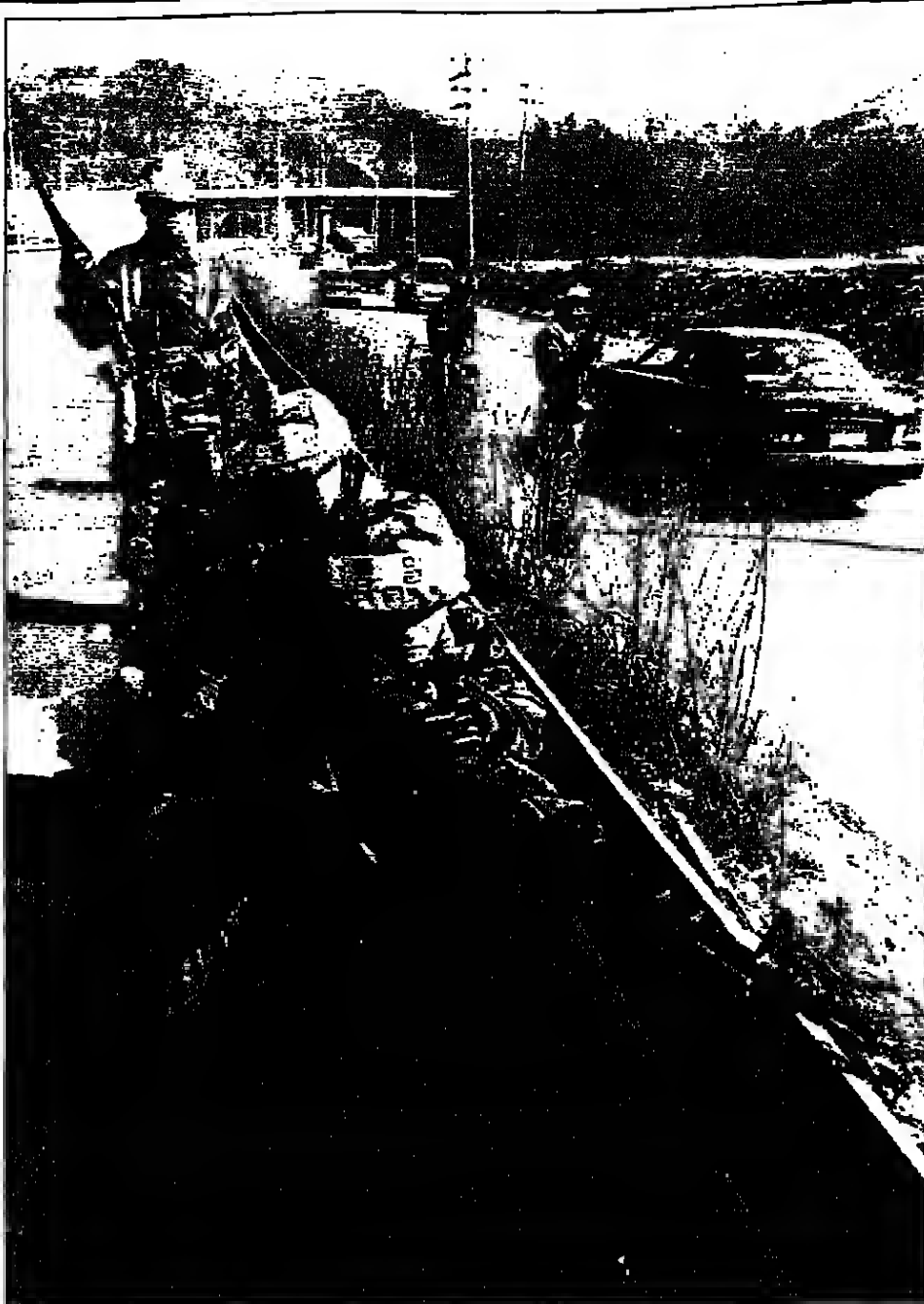
"If he has really been kidnapped, then we would have to react in that way because it would be an act of provocation," he said.

Other North Korean diplomats also watching — although most from the comfort of their luxury Sedans — refused to make any comment, although their anger and frustration at the situation was clear.

In a repetition of numerous attempts since Thursday to cross the security cordon, a diplomat drove his car aggressively at the barrier, and then at a group of journalists, who were filming him, an AFP journalist saw.

He veered away at the last moment and demanded Chinese police remove the reporters before he was forced to reverse back down the road.

More than 30 Pyongyang students in Beijing have been drafted in by the North Korean embassy to take 10-hour shifts watching the consular building.



South Korean troops take up positions during a Sunday search for two suspected North Korean agents who shot and seriously wounded defector Li Il-Man, a relative of Pyongyang leader Kim Jong-Il's ex-wife Sung Hye-Rim. Mr. Li, known in South Korea as Lee Han-Yong, defected to South Korea in 1982 from Europe where he had been studying. (Renter photo)

At least 163 Algerian Islamic militants killed recently — reports

ALGIERS (AFP) — At least 163 armed Islamic militants have been killed in the past few days in mass swoops by security forces to the south and west of Algiers, according to press reports.

Al Watan reported that 143 extremists were killed by the army, backed by police and self-defence groups, in the Blida, Medea, Djelfa, Tipaza and Tlemcen regions of Algiers.

The newspaper Liberte meanwhile reported that around 15 militants had been killed in Algiers and the surrounding area between Thursday and Friday.

Al Khabar had reported Saturday that 12 militants had been killed by security forces in the Saïda region, southwest of the capital. Another six militants, two of them women, had been killed Wednesday in an assault on a flat in which they were holed up in central Algiers.

Al Watan, in its account of the security situation, said 63 militants had been killed

in a single operation, east of Medea, but did not give an exact date.

It added that in the Tlemcen region, in west Algeria, 22 armed Islamic militants had been killed and a "major haul of arms and subversive documents" been recovered by security forces.

Seven militants have been killed in Algiers, while "special security forces" have been carrying out a sweep "in the axis of Baraki, Sidid Moussa, Larbaa, as far as Kolea," west of the capital, since Tuesday, Al Watan said.

"Around 20 terrorists have been killed," the paper said, adding that "the whole region is sealed off and is being searched bit by bit."

It said seven more militants had been killed Saturday in the Sebala district, between Draria and Al Aebour, in the southwest suburbs of Algiers, and another seven Friday in a hide-out in Eucalyptus, in the southeast.

Twelve more had been killed at Saïda and 10 at

Sidi Bel Abbes and a dozen bomb-making laboratories had been destroyed near Algiers, it added.

Liberte meanwhile reported that nine Islamic militants holed up in a house at Haouch Al Miliani had been killed by security forces Thursday. It said the group had been responsible for a massacre of 14 people on Feb. 7.

It reported another six Islamic extremists killed Thursday in Baraki, a southeastern suburb of Algiers.

Al Watan said the sweeps were being carried out ahead of the general elections, due in June, which President Liamine Zeroual has pledged will go ahead in total security.

"At the approach of the elections, several security measures will be taken, among others, sweeps and the installation of a permanent presence in the so-called 'hot districts' in order to suppress the activities of these armed groups," Al Watan said.

Blast near Turkish mission may not be political — Australian police

SYDNEY (R) — An explosion destroyed a house next to the Turkish consulate-general in Sydney Sunday, but Australian police said they did not think the attack was politically motivated.

There were no immediate reports of serious injuries from what police said they believed was "a very substantial" bomb, which destroyed a vacant two-storey house and damaged surrounding houses in the upscale Sydney suburb of Woollahra, some to several foreign missions.

"It would appear to be some sort of explosion, but not a gas explosion," Senior Constable Scott Willis told Reuters at the scene.

Mr. Willis said the blast was probably caused by a bomb, but thought it unlikely to be politically motivated.

"It (political motivation) hasn't been ruled out, but at this stage it doesn't appear likely," he said.

Consul-General Sereit Urgin was not in the building when the blast occurred just before 5.00

p.m. local time (0600 GMT) in Australia's highest city.

But he said staff and their families living nearby were shaken and consular buildings and cars had been damaged.

"... This has been very traumatic for all of them, especially the women and children," he told reporters.

Police said two men were seen running from the scene just before the explosion, which hurled debris hundreds of metres and was heard about five kilometres away.

The police special squad, used in sensitive cases, and the bomb squad have been called in.

Former Labour Prime Minister Paul Keating recently moved into an historic \$1.7 million mansion just a few hundred metres away.

Mr. Willis said police were investigating the possibility the explosion was linked to a local dispute over a proposed redevelopment of the site where the blast occurred.

Resident activist Robin Brampton told Reuters

local authorities had recently forged a compromise between residents and developers over the height of a planned multi-storey residential building where the explosion occurred.

But Mr. Brampton, a director of the Queens Street and West Woollahra Residents Association, rejected any link.

"I think it's ridiculous to suggest that any local residents would do this to oppose this type of development," he said. "We are not that radical."

There have also been several recent protests outside the Turkish consulate-general by Turkish expatriates, including demonstrations over Ankara's treatment of Kurdish separatists, locals said.

Political and ethnic violence is rare in Australia, despite its racially-diverse make-up.

But in 1980, the Turkish consul-general in Sydney and a bodyguard were shot dead in the city. A group called the Justice Commandos of the Armenian Genocide claimed responsibility.

Rifkind, Tung fail to bridge gulf on H. Kong

HONG KONG (R) — British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind met future Hong Kong leader Tung Chee-Hwa Sunday for the first time since Mr. Tung was chosen but failed to narrow the Gulf between the territory's outgoing and incoming governments.

Mr. Tung, a shipping magnate anointed by Beijing in December, told reporters after the talks that London had not huddled in its refusal to aid a provisional legislature that China would install when the British leave later this year.

"On the work of the provisional legislature, I've urged the Hong Kong government to give assistance and help," Mr. Tung said.

"Britain's position has always been clear, but I hope they will reconsider."

Britain argues that the formation of the Provisional Legislature, set up by a China-appointed panel to replace the elected chamber, is illegal under the terms of the 1984 Sino-British handover treaty on Hong Kong.

Hong Kong reverts to China at midnight on June 30.

Mr. Rifkind's brief visit, perhaps his last to Hong Kong before the flag comes down on more than 150 years of British colonial rule of the territory, was cut short to let him return early to London for a key vote in parliament on the "mad cow" crisis.

A loss could trigger a vote of no confidence in the ruling Conservative Party, which is juggling the polls.

But Hong Kong's South China Morning Post, miffed that Mr. Rifkind was putting domestic concerns ahead of Hong Kong's problems, headlined its Sunday editorial: "When mad cows matter more than Hong Kong."

Britain is to hold a general election before May 22, and it is not known who will be at the helm at the time of the handover. But whoever holds the foreign secretary's portfolio in the final days of the countdown can be assured of a bumpy ride.

With 135 days to go until the transition, Hong Kong is awash with conflicting emotions that have pitted the pro-Beijing and pro-democracy camps against each other and sparked acrimonious exchanges.

Mr. Tung last week hit out at the Democracy Party, accusing it of blackening Hong Kong's name overseas by spreading doomsday predictions about the loss of freedoms.

He argued that Hong Kong's economy was buoyant, its people upbeat, and described China's plans as mere technicalities.

His comments have hit a raw nerve with the vocal pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong, which argues that a tide of opinion has been rising against what they describe as Mr. Tung's increasingly authoritarian policy statements.

"This is just the beginning. The way things are going, Tung Chee-Hwa and his government-in-waiting will be running out of popularity long before July 1," pro-democracy lawmaker Margaret Ng wrote in a newspaper column Friday.

"Mr. Tung's ship of state is charting a decidedly retrogressive course," she wrote. "Confidence may yet be restored provided this paranoia about democracy is put aside."

Another symbol of Hong Kong's British heritage passed into the history books during Mr. Rifkind's visit.

The 115-year-old Royal Observatory, given its "royal" prefix by King George V in 1912, dropped the royal coat of arms from its emblem. Its new logo has spiralling cloudbanks symbolising typhoons, the storms that pound Hong Kong.

Albright brings new details of NATO plans to Russia

ROME (R) — U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, beginning her first overseas trip, said Saturday she would unveil new details of NATO's proposals for European security when she meets Russian leaders later in the week.

Mrs. Albright, who arrived in Rome from Washington, D.C. Sunday morning, is focusing much of her 11-day trip to nine world capitals on NATO plans to expand into Eastern Europe and to persuade Russia to agree by a July NATO summit on a charter defining a special new relationship with the Western alliance.

"We are constantly ... adding meat to the charter ... there's beef in this charter," she told reporters on her U.S. Air Force jet, adding: "We're on a very fast track here. We have lots of work to do before July."

She also said that despite President Boris Yeltsin's health problems she was "not concerned about the future direction of Russia.... Obviously he himself and the role he has played in democratising Russia and reform is important. But there are other elements

within the government who are also increasingly dedicated to democracy and economic reform."

Political opponents have urged Yeltsin to step aside, arguing his health has interfered with his duties. But Mrs. Albright said "his health seems to be improving."

Mrs. Albright was expected to meet Italian leaders Sunday then visit Bonn, Paris, Brussels, London, Moscow, Seoul, Tokyo and Beijing.

The chance of accompanying her on the whirlwind trip was the subject of fierce competition among some 40 news organisations seeking seats on her airplane. A dozen reporters were selected.

During talks in Moscow on Feb. 20-21 that are to include a meeting with Mr. Yeltsin, Mrs. Albright said she would "fill out" discussions that took place in Washington last week with Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin.

"The purpose of my stop in Moscow is to give them further substance on this (NATO-Russia Charter). I'm not going to be asking them for decisions. I will be presenting further details. I will have the opportunity to

explain more what we are doing. It's not a negotiation," she said.

She plans to discuss her presentation to Moscow with NATO foreign ministers Tuesday at alliance headquarters in Brussels.

Aiming to calm Moscow's concerns about NATO expansion, the alliance proposed a charter with Russia that envisions a joint council for intensive consultations. It would give Russia "a voice, not a veto" in decision-making, she said.

Moscow has called for a legally-binding charter but Mrs. Albright said: "We see it as a political document primarily."

"It's very important for the Europeans and the Russians to understand that we are into a new era. We do not need old thinking in terms of how NATO is viewed. It's not an adversarial relationship with Russia."

She reiterated the U.S. view that even if the charter was not completed by the time of the NATO summit in Madrid on July 7-8, the alliance would still decide which new members to admit. Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic are top contenders.

Officials also said Mrs. Albright would discuss new projections about the costs of NATO expansion and assumptions underlying those calculations.

French President Jacques Chirac proposed a NATO mini-summit before the Madrid summit but Mrs. Albright ruled that out, saying the focus now is on "substance" not "process."

Also while in Europe, Mrs. Albright said she would discuss cooperative efforts on Bosnia, Cyprus, Turkey and Zaire.

Mrs. Albright refused to say what new details she would unveil to Russia. In addition to the charter, however, NATO has a new conventional arms reduction offer that is a major element in the package of proposals aimed at meeting Russian concerns.

A high-level NATO task force is to meet in Brussels Monday to see if there is consensus on the arms proposal, which one U.S. official said contains "significant" reductions beyond current levels in the 1990 Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty. Mrs. Albright is expected to discuss that in Moscow.

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Albanian president admits mistakes amid protests

TIRANA (R) — Albanians who lost their life savings when Pyramid investment schemes collapsed planned fresh protests after President Sali Berisha admitted the government made mistakes in handling the crisis.

The main opposition alliance, the Forum for Democracy, urged people to attend a mass rally in Tirana although it did not have an official permit for the demonstration.

Mr. Berisha, in his first real explanation for the scandal, blamed the government, the opposition parties and "those who chose" to all their money into high-risk schemes — and lost

everything.

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Way to eliminating poverty

A GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED study published recently paints a grim picture about poverty in the country. The study, conducted by the Department of Statistics in cooperation with the Oslo-based Institute of Applied Social Studies, FAFO, confirmed what most of us have long suspected, that a good percentage of Jordanians still live below the poverty line. The study found that 26.4 per cent of Jordanian families live on an income that is below JD1,450 annually, 10 per cent of which earn only less than JD900 a year. On the brighter side, however, over 50 per cent of the 6,000 families surveyed said they regarded themselves as neither poor nor rich, something that suggests that middle class Jordanians still constitute the bulk of the society even though so many people live below the permissible poverty line. By comparison, only one per cent of the families polled said they considered themselves rich. What concerns us here though is how to deal with poverty and the imbalance of distribution of wealth.

What to do about lifting so many Jordanians from dire poverty must be on the top of the agenda of government and Parliament. So far, we seem to spend so much time discussing and debating so many domestic and external issues but find little time to devote to what touches on the lives of people most. Allowing the gap between the haves and have-nots to expand instead of retreat is a dangerous thing to do. There must be something that can be done to deal with poverty and its major cause, unemployment.

The recently revealed government programme to provide a JD400 million social safety net for the poor is a commendable step. It will help the poor and low income families. But charity and state subsidies, helpful as they may be, are not a substitute for sound economic policies that will ultimately lead to the creation of wealth and insure its fair distribution. Contrary to general belief, the soundest economic policies for the future of Jordan should revolve around the concept of less government. Experience has proven, here and elsewhere, that government intervention, taxes, a fat bureaucracy, more laws, controlled education, licences and permits and the like are all anathema to social and economic progress and prosperity.

We are aware, however, that transition from the current mode of economic activity to a new freer mode cannot come overnight. It can only be introduced slowly. Jordan has started this slow process and now it is the responsibility of everyone to ensure that the process will not be reversed or halted.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Ra'i daily Sunday said that Israeli Premier Benjamin Netanyahu's signing of an accord on the redeployment of Israeli forces in the Hebron area has opened for him the doors to end his country's isolation that has persisted since assuming power because of his adamant position regarding the implementation of the Oslo accord. Before signing the Hebron agreement Mr. Netanyahu was an international pariah and a person that has won the enmity of Arabs and non-Arabs alike, said Fahed Faneh. But soon after signing the agreement, Mr. Netanyahu received invitations to visit Jordan and Egypt, was welcomed as a hero at the Davos meeting in Switzerland, and was welcomed at the Vatican by Pope John Paul II and President Bill Clinton at the White House, continued the writer. The signing of the Hebron agreement was a very favourable development for Israel, at the international level, although the agreement did not constitute more than five per cent of what is still to be done and the steps to be taken towards the fulfilment of the peace requirements in Palestine, according to the writer. He said it is useful for the Arabs and the world community at large to reward Netanyahu for his good behaviour, but it is equally important for them to punish the Israeli leader whenever he tends to revert to his adamant and hardline position: they should isolate him until he complies with the requirements of a lasting peace. The writer said that with Mr. Netanyahu, the carrot and the stick policy seems to be very effective.

A WRITER for Al Dustour discussed the question of food coupons that enable limited income groups to buy subsidised food, expressing the view that the coupons system was ineffective and invited corruption. Citing a recent statement by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabarid as admitting that corruption was there among Ministry of Supply employees who distribute coupons, Mohammad Subeishi asked why 4,021 million coupons were distributed by these ministry officials when the country's population eligible for subsidy is estimated at 3.6 million. This means that 1.5 million coupons have been dispensed with in an illegal manner, concluded the writer. He suggested that the government conduct an investigation into the affair, punish the culprits and scrap the food coupons system altogether, offering the needy groups instead only cash subsidy, a system deemed as far more effective and as saving a great deal for the state's treasury.

Economic Review

By Dr. Yusuf Mansur

'Currency devaluation will not make an economy internationally competitive'

RECENTLY, some very prominent and influential Jordanian economists have begun to advocate the devaluation of the dinar to encourage investment and exports. However, such talk is dangerous in that it adversely affects the expectations of investors and provides the wrong policy advice. Maintaining the stability of the dinar should come as a top priority to decision makers at the Central Bank of Jordan if the Kingdom is to achieve the present year's intended real growth rate of 6 per cent without significant hardship.

One outcome of devaluing the dinar would be a higher inflation rate, as the nominal price of imports rises. Jordanians would have to spend more dinars to purchase the commodities they purchased before the devaluation. Most significantly, the increase in our exports will neither be significant nor real because it will have been caused by a relatively cheaper dinar, which is similar to offering a discount on Jordanian products, and the result will be a lower income to Jordan. This, in turn, will lead to impoverishing the nation's workers as they produce more and receive less. (This same argument was delineated by Professor Michael Porter from the Harvard Business School during a seminar he gave a month ago in Jordan. Additionally, similar arguments have been used by several economists in the U.S. to counter demands for lowering the exchange rate of the dollar).

The government debt of just under \$6 billion and the interest payments will become significantly higher in terms of the dinar which would cause the government to either raise taxes or borrow more to finance its old debt. According to an empirical study, conducted in 1993 by Stanley Fischer, a Nobel laureate in economics, real economic growth is negatively correlated with inflation. This finding corroborates the findings of several other recent studies in this regard. In other words, an unstable business environment and a high inflation rate would retard the future development and growth of the economy. Jordan must maintain the stability of the dinar and keep the inflation rate in check if it does not wish to derogate its future growth potential.

The Central Bank of Jordan, in its efforts to stabilise the dinar, has been influencing the discount rate through the purchase of certificates of deposit. This has proved to be a very effective tool in bridling the inflationary upsurge which came about last year as the government adopted several policies, such as the shift from price subsidies to cash transfers for several commodities, whose effects were inflationary.

In fact, the CBJ was able to maintain its credibility last year as an inflation fighter because it focused on stabilising the dinar. As the financial market becomes more efficient, the Central Bank will be able to further enhance this reputation. However, the monetary transfer mechanism which will become available to the Central Bank with a more efficient financial market, due to modernisation, innovation and the spread of new financial tools will also make the task of the bank more complex.

A recent article in The Economist magazine, based on a research paper by Arturo Estrella and Fredric Mishkin from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, underscored some of the problems that banks in industrialised economies have in combating inflation. The main problem is the choice of a target measure. Some banks set as their goal an inflation target and apply monetary policy accordingly. Others use money aggregates, such as M2, which consists of cash, checking accounts, small time deposits and money market fund balances. However, because of growing sophistication in these markets, the boundaries between M2 and other measures, such as M1 and M3, have become blurred, which reduces the usefulness of M2 as a predictor of inflation. A third approach is to target a certain nominal rate of growth of the GDP without any regard for the real rate of growth. Each of the methods has its own merits and depends on the nature of the economy.

Clearly, inflation is counterproductive and currency devaluation will not make an economy internationally competitive. On the other hand, all other messages to the contrary should be read with a sizeable pinch of salt.

Final peace settlement 'must give Palestinians a sovereign, uncontested, independent state'

By A. S. Khalidi

LONDON — In the weeks since the signing of the Hebron agreement, the final destination of a Palestinian-Israeli peace settlement has begun to emerge from the political haze.

Such a settlement must not only end the Israeli occupation and colonisation of Palestinian soil, it must give the Palestinian people a sovereign, uncontested, independent state of their own.

This is a matter of justice and practicality. If a truly lasting and stable peace is the goal, there is no other option.

The notion of a Palestinian state has gradually broken the bounds of the unthinkable and has seeped into the very centre of the debate over the future of the peace process. In the United States, even such ardent supporters of Israel as Henry Kissinger and William Safire have grudgingly acknowledged that a Palestinian state is inevitable.

Even on the Israeli right, political discourse has begun to shift significantly. David Bar-Ilan, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's senior adviser, has spoken of a state of "limited sovereignty" for the Palestinians. Avraham Stern, a right-wing member of the Knesset, has declared that opposition to a state "is not something holy." For its part, Israel's Labour Party has dropped its longstanding opposition to a Palestinian state.

Although these changes have yet to be acknowledged by Mr. Netanyahu, the truth is that Palestinians already have most of the prerequisites of sovereignty: control over land, a legitimate political process and quasi-governmental institutions. Yet these precursors of statehood remain fragile, incomplete and still subject to Israeli dictates.

Israel, for example, continues to seal off Palestinian areas, keeping thousands from jobs, schools and even hospitals. And Mr. Netanyahu continues to insist on maintaining and expanding Israeli settlements, recently restoring financial incentives to settlers.

In the coming weeks, Israeli and Palestinian negotiators are scheduled to begin taking up the

toughest issues, those left for the final stage of the peace agreement: refugees, borders, settlements, security and the future of Jerusalem. Though the Israeli government is not likely to publicly acknowledge it, these talks will really be about the future shape of a Palestinian state.

For a settlement to be truly final, it must minimise the chances of future rejection or violent disaffection. The vast majority of Palestinians would support a settlement that resulted in a Palestinian state in Gaza and the West Bank, with its capital in East Jerusalem.

Such a settlement would have the legitimacy necessary for a stable peace, which would be in the interests of Palestinians and Israelis.

But the mere trappings of statehood will not suffice. The state has to be real and workable. The following are its essential conditions:

— **Territorial integrity and continuity.** The Palestinians' ability to accept further territorial compromise is severely constrained by historical, political and geographic realities, including the lack of a direct link between Gaza and the West Bank. Any further dissection of Palestinian territory would make it politically and economically impossible to maintain a state.

"...Palestinians already have most of the prerequisites of sovereignty: control over land, a legitimate political process and quasi-governmental institutions."

Because Israeli settlements would be a constant challenge to the new state's security and integrity, there can be no civilian pockets under Israeli rule on Palestinian land. But there is no reason why individual Israelis could not live in Palestine and individual Palestinians could not live in Israel.

— **A sovereign capital in Jerusalem.** East Jerusalem is Palestine's historical,

spiritual and commercial heart. To exclude it from a Palestinian state is unthinkable. Moreover, the boundaries of what Israelis call their "eternal united capital" are neither sacred nor irrevocable. Israel imposed arbitrary new borders on the city in 1967, by annexing to it areas of the West Bank.

With the exception of the Jewish holy places in the Old City, few Israelis can claim much attachment to Jerusalem's existing boundaries.

A recently published survey by researchers from the University of Maryland and Israel's Guttman Institute of Applied Social Research found that 70 per cent of Israelis who had been in Jerusalem had never ventured into the Arab areas beyond the Old City, and that about 60 per cent would accept a redefinition of the city limits to "exclude Arab neighbourhoods" and ensure an overwhelming Jewish majority in their part of Jerusalem. A poll published last year by Ma'ariv, an Israeli newspaper, even found a slight majority of Israelis in favour of moving the capital to Tel Aviv.

The view perpetuated by politicians that Israelis would accept nothing less than exclusive control over the whole city need not be blithely accepted. There is no good reason why Jerusalem cannot

have two separate, co-existing sovereignties within nominal, open borders that demarcate the Arab and Jewish areas. Freedom of movement and access to holy places could be guaranteed without redrawing of the city.

— **Security.** While appreciating Israeli security concerns, Palestinians have deeply rooted concerns of their own. Given the loss of their homeland in 1948 and occupation

since 1967, Palestinians cannot be expected to cede their right to self-defence unilaterally.

Instead of being totally demilitarised, a Palestinian state should be capable of limited self-defence but not have the ability to threaten its neighbours.

In practical terms, this would mean no defence pacts with countries hostile to Israel, limits on the size and nature of Palestinian defence forces and no offensive weaponry. International guarantees for both sides and a bilateral no-aggression pact should reinforce mutual security, as could an international peace-keeping or monitoring presence. Israel's requirements for early-warning and ground-to-air defences and joint security arrangements covering the Jordan Valley could be negotiated.

— **Justice and fairness for refugees.** No final resolution can be complete without addressing the needs and aspirations of Palestinian refugees. As a matter of principle, the Palestinians' right to return or to be compensated for their lost homes and land is non-negotiable. How this right is exercised is a matter for negotiation.

Israel must acknowledge the suffering and hardship Palestinian refugees have faced as a result of their eviction from their homeland, and must assist in their rehabilitation and reabsorption.

For their part, the Palestinians have to acknowledge that a return to the status quo before the creation of Israel in 1948 is impossible and that a resolution of the refugee issue will effectively close the file on this fundamental issue.

This is not a full blueprint for Palestine. The hard details must be left to the negotiators. But these conditions for Palestinian statehood must be met if hopes for a lasting peace settlement are not to be an illusion.

The writer, editor of the Arabic edition of The Journal of Palestine Studies, advised the Palestinian delegation during Middle East peace talks from 1991 to 1993. This article is reprinted from the International Herald Tribune.

Human Rights File

When government takes over passing laws, legislature becomes a wayside story

By Dr. Walced M. Sadi

ARTICLE 25 of the Constitution stipulates that the legislative authority rests with the Parliament and His Majesty the King. Yet, Article 94(1) accords the executive branch, as reflected in the cabinet and with the consent of the King, the authority to act legislatively by enacting temporary laws when Parliament is not in session or dissolved. The constitutional caveat attached to this executive branch "encroachment" on the legislative branch is quite clear in the sense that it condones such "interference" in Parliament's only when there are pressing issues or measures that cannot wait.

Over and above these constraints, there is an overriding proviso that all such temporary legislation must be consistent with the Constitution.

This temporary legislation must also be submitted to Parliament, as soon as it is in session. Parliament then may exercise its prerogative to reject the legislation or enter some amendments thereto.

But have all these guidelines been observed every time the government acts as a legislature? If we take the temporary law on elections that was adopted by the government in 1993 and enacted as a full fledged legislation only ten days ago as an example, it would readily suggest that the Constitution is not always fully and faithfully observed by the executive branch when it enters the threshold of the legislative branch of government.

In retrospect, the temporary law in question was not so pressing as to require an immediate action by the cabinet in the absence of parliamentary action. As necessary as the one-man, one-vote criterion is, there was nothing so urgent about it that it could not await full airing and consideration by the people's representatives in the Lower House of Parliament, in conjunction with other complementary features of the law that also require redress.

Jordan has been enjoying parliamentary life ever since 1989 and there is no case ever when Parliament could not be reconvened in an extraordinary session to act on a piece of legislation that purports to change the decades-long formula for conducting national elections.

So while part of this law was rectified when Parliament adopted the one-person, one-vote formula, this rectification fell short of the goal of acting on all the other complementary aspects without which the one-person, one-vote formula remains seriously lacking. Moreover, the redress of only one dimension of the election law, in isolation of the remaining ones, appears to violate the organic law of the land.

The fact that Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti concedes that the country still needs a modern election law, over and above the one-person, one-vote criterion, which should elicit complementary amendments, suggests that neither the temporary law nor the new law are in full conformity with the Constitution.

Proportional representation on the basis of electoral districts with equal-size populations and the resolution of the valid controversy over the existing quota system for women and religious and ethnic minorities lends additional agreement to the legal proposition that the applicable election legislation violates the Constitution.

The reason is obvious: the election law as currently formulated violates several features of the Constitution, especially Article 6 which calls for equal treatment of Jordanians, which clearly implies equal voting and political power. Suffice to recall that neither the old nor the recent type of election properly addresses the equality clause of the Constitution by virtue of, inter alia, the absence of proportional representation.

I would submit that before the country goes any further and elects a new Lower House, it must endeavour between now and the projected fall elections to put in place a true contemporary election law that conforms with the Constitution and the treaties that we have so proudly endorsed and ratified.

Had we had a dynamic court system that could pronounce judgements on the constitutionality of national laws, I feel reasonably certain that the existing legislation on election would be struck out as contrary to the Constitution. If the newly adopted law on elections is voidable in a court of law, as unconstitutional, then all elections held on its basis are voidable.

LETTERS

The other side of a story

To the Editor:

I AM an American that is currently attending the MA programme for Middle Eastern history at Tel Aviv University. My research focuses primarily on Jordanian affairs; hence, the "Jordan Times" has been an indispensable resource when trying to find updated material on your country's political events and opinions.

I would like to enquire as to when your newspaper will begin to do more in-depth feature stories on Israeli public opinion about relations with Jordan, as well as Israeli views on how to proceed in the peace talks?

I think that such articles would be a much appreciated addition to the Jordan Times and offer its readers a chance to see things from "the other side's" perspective.

Shannon Gilbert, gilberti@zoat.tau.ac.il

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Features

TV wars — Cairo 'will not be able to hold out against private stations for ever'

By Steve Negus

CAIRO — A sex scandal in Egypt's tabloid press suggests that Information Minister Safwat Sbari, probably one of the three most powerful men in the country, has declared war against rival Arab TV stations in an attempt to prove his competence to the president. The Gulf influence on the Egyptian media is notorious. Egyptians call the information ministry headquarters at Maspero in Cairo's Nile corniche district the biggest brothel in the Middle East. Ministry officials control access to the huge Egyptian media market, lucrative to itself and an essential stepping stone to other Arab markets. According to show-business gossip, even well-established female entertainers must submit to occasional trysts with wealthy admirers in the Gulf, for which ministry officials take handsome mediators' fees.

Consequently, no one was surprised by the charges that appeared in the Dec. 16 edition of the pro-government tabloid *Rose Al Yusuf* that television production chief Mamduh Al Laithi took a

bribe of a Mercedes to overlook an affair between actress Shirin Saif Al Nasr and Saudi hotel investor Prince Abdul Aziz Ibrahim. The paper also charged that Laithi had forced lesser actresses working in the ministry to entertain the prince and his friends at private parties. The specific charges did not surprise readers — rather, they were shocked by the fact that they had appeared in print. Why would *Rose Al Yusuf*, known for shamelessly currying favour with the wealthy and the powerful, dare to name names and make enemies?

The sex scandal leak is a common weapon in Egypt's internal power struggles. In 1992, *Rose Al Yusuf* reported an affair between alleged Israeli agent Lucy Arin and the immensely popular former defence minister, Mohammad Abu Ghazala. The report was printed long after Abu Ghazala retired, however, and was viewed as an attempt by Sharif to discourage him from seeking the vice-presidency. Otherwise, *Rose Al Yusuf* would probably not have dared publish.

Consequently, no one believes that Adil Ham-

da, the paper's opportunistic editor, would have run the Laithi story without a go-ahead from Safwat Sbari. The build-up to the story also suggests that Sbari gave Hammuda a whisper in the ear. On Dec. 9, Hammuda wrote a story about a forthcoming promotion within the ministry, making a seemingly irrelevant reference to the marriage between Saif Al Nasr and Prince Ibrahim. This is typical *Rose Al Yusuf* — pussy-footing around with trial balloons before splashing the big story in subsequent issues. Laithi reacted by filing libel charges against Hammuda, presumably to dissuade him from going further. Normally, that would have ended the story right there, but Sbari ensured that the story would go ahead by filing his own complaint with the prosecutor about Laithi's conduct.

Laithi was arrested, charged with bribery and, on Dec. 16, *Rose Al Yusuf* ran the full exposé, including even the illicit Mercedes licence-plate number. Laithi is still under investigation but has not yet been fired.

Why did Sbari act? According to *Rose Al*

Yusuf, on Jan. 6, he dumped Laithi as the opening salvo in a war to reclaim Egypt's artistic talent from Gulf television stations. Sex was the least of the commodities offered by Egyptian TV to the Gulf, and Laithi was the Saudi media's main agent in Cairo. He sublet Maspero's facilities to Gulf television and cable stations. He allowed Egyptian movies to be sold to Gulf channels within months of their release in cinemas. He was lax on Egyptians like Saif Al Nasr who spent their time and energy on Gulf projects rather than Egyptian ones. Laithi's profit from his agency cannot be estimated (other than the Mercedes) but his son was given the directorship of the Cairo office of the Saudi satellite channel MBC.

The result? According to nearly all Egyptian intellectuals, the legacy of Laithi and his like-minded predecessors has been the collapse of the quality of Egyptian television. The best talk shows, the most popular televised concerts, the latest dubbed Western movies — all these are now the property of Gulf-owned Arab satellite television. A

few years ago, Saudis bought boosters to pick up Egyptian television; today, Egyptians are buying dishes to pick up Saudi satellite.

Media nationalism

Over the following weeks Egypt's media leaders announced a new policy of media nationalism. The cinema employees' union declared that its members would not be allowed to sell their movies to non-Egyptian TV channels. And Abdul Rahman Hafez, the new president of the Television and Broadcasting Union, blasted Egyptian artists working for other countries in an interview published on Dec. 23 in *Rose Al Yusuf*. "We need to know where Egypt's interests lie," he said.

But why would Sharif — who has milked his own Gulf connections for a long time — suddenly act to reclaim Egyptian television? The risk is enormous — Gulf stations could begin their own talent-spotting inside Egypt, offering tempting salaries to Egyptian performers, writers and presenters before they ever start working in Maspero.

Moreover, if he is perceived as the enemy, rather than the partner, of the Saudi media magnates, his own supply of money and power might dry up.

So why take the risk? Perhaps he just thought Laithi had gone too far. Perhaps he had been contemplating this move for several years — the boom in consumer goods available in Egypt in the 1990s has dramatically increased the potential advertising revenues of Egyptian television at the same time as everyone is buying satellite dishes to tune into the Gulf.

The ancien régime

But a more intriguing possibility is that he perceived his job, or his power base, to be in danger. Sharif is the leading representative of the military and intelligence chiefs which Egyptian intellectuals call the *tanzim* or *ríkhi*, the ancien régime. (Laithi is also a member of this class — he was a former security officer who several prominent Egyptians have accused of personally supervising their torture sessions.) Men like Sharif and Laithi were handed lucrative posts in return for

loyal service, and were expected to milk it to the utmost.

This class now feels itself under threat. Rumours are rife of a coming cabinet reshuffle in which new ministers will be chosen by private-sector businessmen who have access to the president. In private, these businessmen often express their loathing for the ancien régime's corruption.

In particular, businessmen resent Sharif because he has blocked the creation of private TV stations. Just before the recent MENA conference, American Chamber of Commerce head Shafiq Jaber came out loudly in favour of private stations — an unthinkable proposition a few years ago. Rumours began to circulate that business leaders were lobbying to replace Sharif with the liberal head of the State Information Service, Nabil Uthman.

Cutting Sharif down to size would not only please the businessmen, it would also please the many intellectuals who consider him the leading threat to freedom of expression in Egypt, as well as a number of foreign diplomats (who consider him something of a xenophobe).

Sharif is fighting back. "The Egyptian media are ready to compete in the era of open airwaves," he declared on Jan. 1, an unusual acknowledgement of the possibility that the media might not in fact be ready. But for Sharif to keep his power base, he must keep the state's monopoly on the broadcast media. And for him to maintain the monopoly, he must rescue Egyptian television from the sorry state in which it has fallen. For him to do that, he must turn on his former allies in the Gulf. It appears that Sharif has been forced into one of the biggest gambles of his career.

Ironically, the best hope for Egypt might lie in his failure. Saudi-owned channels offer livelier debate and less censorship than he could ever stomach. Even if Sharif prevails over a renaissance in quality, it will be a limited media, offering gloss but no controversy. If Egyptian television continues its decline, Sharif will not be able to hold out against private stations for ever.

Middle East International

Drug gangs rule, children suffer in Miami's Liberty City

By Angus MacSwan
Reuters

MIAMI — In Miami's poor black district of Liberty City, drug gangs infest the streets, violence is frequent and children are often the victims.

With police helicopters flying overhead and barricades at road junctions, the rundown, rubbish-strewn streets look at times like a war zone — more like Soweto in apartheid days than chic, wealthy Coconut Grove a few kilometres away.

The death last month of 5-year-old Rickia Issac, hit by a stray bullet as she walked home from a Martin Luther King day parade, touched many people and forced the attention of city and police officials on the blighted area. But police and community leaders hold out little hope

the violence and crime will ease in one of the most dangerous parts of one of the toughest cities in the United States.

"This (area) is a flea market for drugs," the Rev. Douglas Cook said, sitting in a pew in Jordan Grove Baptist Church. "Drugs have got so heavy people don't have their heads on right. People just start shooting from anywhere."

More than 2,000 people packed his church last weekend for Rickia's funeral. A few days earlier a service was held there for two of five men whose bodies were found bound and gagged, shot execution-style, in an apartment that police said was used as a marijuana-packing plant.

Community leaders announced a gun buy-back programme, but only about

a dozen weapons were handed in and by the end of the week it was business as usual. As night fell on Friday, police set up a roadblock on the border of Liberty City and the immigrant Little Haiti district to check vehicles for guns, drugs and drunk drivers.

Turf war

"What you have is a turf war between the Haitians and the African Americans," police officer Robert McIlsh told a reporter who rode with him on a night-time patrol. "If there's a drive-by killing on one side of the highway there's usually one a week or so later on the other side in retaliation."

McIlsh, 27, who was born in Jamaica and has been a policeman for two

years, carried a Glock 22 pistol and wore a bullet-proof vest under his shirt. The gangs have "just about everything" in guns, including AK-47s and Uzis, he said.

As he drove through streets of small, squat houses and barracks-like apartment blocks, groups of men loitering outside bars and liquor stores glared at the car. There seemed to be either a church or a bar at every corner.

Outside one church a sign read: "If not now, when? For the love of our children increase the peace." Murals painted on crumbling walls depict black icons such as Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela and Malcolm X.

Many streets have been barricaded by police. "There's one way in and one way out," McIlsh said.

During his shift he checked out arguments among neighbours, tenants and landlords and complaints of domestic violence. Two teenage girls threatened to rally their friends against each other in a fight over a boy who gave one of them 15 cents.

Their mothers feared a repetition of an incident last week when a schoolgirl shot another in the face.

"Somebody's gonna end up dead for nothing," McIlsh told them as he calmed the situation.

Later a young boy ran up to the patrol car to say his big brother had just beaten up his sister.

To the officer's relief there was no heavy gunplay that night, but a policeman died when he crashed his car after swerving to avoid a beggar in a wheelchair.

McIlsh was sympathetic

to the people of Liberty City, where jobs are scarce, many adults are on welfare and single women struggle to bring up large families with absent fathers. "Within this community you have a lot of decent people too," he said.

Rev. Cook echoed the litany of woes: "Kids don't listen to parents, police or preachers. The jail is packed. They're all young people and their life is already destroyed."

Blacks see themselves at the bottom of Miami's social heap and are frustrated and angry, he said. In 1980, one of the worst recent U.S. race riots erupted in Liberty City and spread through Miami after an all-white jury acquitted white police officers accused of killing a black man.

Civic leaders are mindful that last October riots broke out in St. Petersburg, 515 km northwest of Miami, after a police shooting incident in a deprived black area.

leave them in an old shoe or a can, then they tell the man — you go pick up that shoe.

"They have the children out there watching if the officers come. They yell 'fire' to warn them. Parents go to work and the kids slip back from school and do what they want."

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Racial resentment also seethes against Miami's huge Cuban population. Blacks feel the waves of immigrants robbed them of work by taking lowly jobs for less than the minimum wage. In November, blacks lost their sole voice on the city commission when Miller Dawkins was fired over a corruption scandal, and a Cuban American won the seat.

Rev. Cook said Liberty City's despair was compounded by the fact that it was fellow blacks who killed Rickia Issac and who were selling drugs on the streets. "It's just sad the way it's happening," he said. "We have let Satan come into our hearts and minds."

Jordan rejects Israeli assertion

(Continued from page 1)

ment's letter, the minister said.

Experts on international law, intellectuals and officials have strongly attacked the Israeli position, which, they say, is in total contradiction to customary and written international laws. They also accuse the government of lacking determination in supporting Jordanians' legitimate claims.

"The Jordanian government has not taken any public action to restore the legitimate property rights of Jordanians, though it could act on two different legal grounds," said Anis Qasem, legal counsellor to the Palestinian delegation at the peace negotiations and editor of the *Palestinian Yearbook of International Law*.

Dr. Qasem as well as Badri Mulqi, former head of the Department of Lands and Survey, said Israel could be charged before international courts and the international community under Article 26 of the Jordanian-Israeli peace agreement and the customary international principle prohibiting any state from enacting any law that contradicts international provisions.

Article 26 of the peace treaty stipulates that "the parties undertake to enact any legislation necessary in order to implement the treaty, and to terminate any international commitments

and to repeal any legislation that is inconsistent with the treaty."

The Israeli law of implementation of the peace treaty, ratified by the Knesset on Feb. 12, 1995 stipulates that the 1950 absentee property law does not follow under the ambit of the peace treaty because this has no retroactive value.

"This is an open violation Article 26 of the peace treaty," Dr. Qasem explained.

In order to comply with Article 26, Jordan has amended its own laws, "lifting all pre-peace restrictions to normal relations with Israel," the Jewish state has "breached the treaty with the ratification law of February 1995," Dr. Qasem said.

Under the 1950 absentee property law, "that Israel used as a provision to confiscate Arab lands and put them under mandate of the absentee-property guard," owners of fixed assets in the occupied territories must refer in person to the concerned Israeli authorities and present extensive documentation proving their ownership to be entitled to file a lawsuit.

"The 1950 absentee-property law and the lack of decisive and determined public action on the government's side make Jordanians' claims almost impossible to be rightfully recognised," Mr. Mulqi said. "The trouble, hardships and never ending negotiations

that a number of Jordanian citizens had to go through to prove their rightful ownership of their own properties" have proven too difficult, he said.

Mr. Mulqi also reproached the government for failing so far to summon the special committee in charge of listing and evaluating Jordanians' properties in Israel as well as receiving the citizens' claims.

The absentee property committee, established in 1995 by the Sharif Zeid cabinet and headed by the minister of finance, "has never been called (by the government) for any meeting or invited to present any report," Mr. Mulqi complained.

In addition to the minister of finance and Mr. Mulqi, the committee includes the secretaries general of the ministries of justice and finance, head of the Department of Land and Survey Ibrahim Musmar, Royal Geographic Centre Director Saleel Khalifeh and former Director for Documentation Kamel Nafrawi.

According to Mr. Mulqi, a complete list of all Jordanians' properties in Israel and the occupied territories has not been finalised yet.

However, "absentee properties are not concentrated in a specific area. They are quite uniformly spread all over Israel and the occupied territories and they are very consistent," he added.

No tangible result yet of efforts

(Continued from page 1)

result of the Arab mediation efforts.

Mr. Dughmi was meanwhile quoted in a Kuwaiti newspaper as saying that the government of the emirate that had reassured Amman that the Jordanian prisoners allegedly mistreated in a Kuwaiti jail last month have excellent conditions.

"They (Kuwaiti officials) confirmed to me that the Jordanian prisoners have excellent conditions and they put me in the picture about the good treatment which they are receiving," Mr. Dughmi was quoted as

saying by the Kuwaiti daily *Al Ra'i Al Aam*.

Mr. Dughmi said he welcomed the Kuwaiti initiative to allow the Omani and Qatari ambassadors to visit the prisoners, and was reassured about the treatment of the Jordanians after speaking with high-ranking Kuwaiti officials.

He said the contacts have "created an atmosphere full of optimism that a pleasant surprise in the affairs of the Jordanian prisoners is very near. He did not elaborate, but that was an implicit reference to the hoped-for release of the prisoners."

Ross to carry 'new formula'

(Continued from page 1)

policy, we will fight it," Mr. Kahalani said, adding that he planned to ask Mr. Netanyahu "some unpleasant questions" when he returns from Washington.

Syria for its part scoffed at the notion that Mr. Netanyahu's Washington talks and "new formula" had brought the two governments closer to the negotiating table.

"Netanyahu's refusal to commit himself to an Israeli withdrawal from the

Golan and South Lebanon, his desire to ensure Israel's security at the expense of Arab rights prevents any optimism and makes peace even further away," said the official *Al Thawra* newspaper on Sunday.

The government newspaper *Tishrin* said: "Netanyahu's comments in Washington show that his position remains the same." The ruling party's paper *Al Baath* insisted the Israeli premier "has not changed his intransigent policy."

Palestinians and Israelis resume talks

(Continued from page 1)

Israel is to hand over to the Palestinians in three troop pullbacks from rural areas of the West Bank. The first pullback is supposed to be completed by March 7.

Israeli negotiator Danny Naveh said, however, that the pullbacks were "not an issue for negotiations."

Israel, backed by the United States, says Israel alone has the right to decide the scope of the further redeployments. The Palestinians insist that the matter be decided in negotiations.

The Palestinians said they would also raise the issue of the expansion of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Israeli construction in East Jerusalem.

Mr. Arafat warned this weekend that Israeli construction in Arab East Jerusalem could harm the chances for peace. He charged Sunday that there are "many violations" by Israel, including Israel's cancellation of the residency permits of Palestinians living in Arab East Jerusalem and alleged excavations near the Al Aqsa Mosque.

Mr. Levy said earlier Sunday that Israel's plans for construction in Arab East Jerusalem and the West Bank settlements did not violate any existing agreements.

"But we are also ... not sitting and waiting for permission for someone on decisions that are not in contradiction to agreements," he added.

"I suggest that Yasser Arafat avoid grand statements and threats or harbour any illusions which will not advance the peace process by one millimetre," said Mr. Levy.

Mr. Arafat on Saturday told a crowd in the West Bank town of Jenin that Israeli settlement activity violated signed agreements and put Israel's commitment to peace in question.

"We are facing serious challenges. The obstacles put in our way by the Israeli government are designed to bring us to our knees," Mr. Arafat said.

"The accords forbid any geographic or demographic changes in the Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, during the interim period," Mr. Arafat said, referring to the period leading up to agreement on a final status of the Palestinian territories.

But Mr. Levy rebuffed his complaints. "Israel has not violated any of its commitments or created any new settlements. No one has the right to challenge where we build."

Many of the issues to be tackled in the new talks have already been the subject of extensive but

unsuccessful negotiations, including Israeli security conditions for the opening of an airport and sea port in the Gaza Strip and establishing "safe passage" corridors for Palestinians to travel from the West Bank to the Gaza Strip.

The two sides are also due to discuss Palestinian demands for an easing of economic and travel restrictions clamped on the West Bank and Gaza Strip a year ago following a series of suicide bombings in Israel.

Other committees will deal with Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and so-called "people-to-people" measures to improve relations between the Israeli and Palestinian populations.

Palestinian negotiator Hassan Asfour told AFP that Sunday's meeting would not get into substantive issues but would focus on setting an agenda and timetable for the negotiations.

He said the talks would involve the heads of the eight working groups plus chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat and close Netanyahu aide Yitzhak Molkho.

LETTERS

The other side of

the Editor:

AM an American programme for the University of Michigan. I have been reading your paper since 1980 and I am very impressed by the quality of your journalism. I would like to see if I can contribute to your paper. I have been a member of the American Press Photo Association since 1980 and I have been a member of the National Press Photographers Association since 1980. I have been a member of the International Press Photo Association since 1980. I have been a member of the World Press Photo Association since 1980. I have been a member of the United Nations Photo Programme since 1980. I have been a member of the International Federation of Journalists since 1980. I have been a member of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemists since 1980. I have been a member of the International Union of Pure and Applied Physicists since 1980. I have been a member of the International Union of Pure and Applied Mathematicians since 1980. 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Study: Arab states not benefiting from growing world oil demand

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab states are boosting their oil production capacity but are not expected to gain ground in the market in the next few years due to output increases from other areas, an official study said.

World oil demand is projected to increase by an annual average 1.4 million barrels per day (bpd) until the year 2000 due to forecast global economic growth of 4.4 per cent annually, the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) said in the annual Arab Economic Report.

But the bulk of the increase would likely come from producers outside the 11-nation Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

"It appears such a phenomenon will continue in the next few years. This will adversely affect oil production in Arab countries and their contribution to crude supplies to the global market," said the

report, also prepared by the Abu Dhabi-based Arab Monetary Fund and the 22-member Arab League.

"There are expectations that production from outside OPEC will increase by an average one million bpd per year until the end of the decade. There is no doubt this will directly affect Arab oil revenues and domestic development," the report added.

Arab states sit atop 645.3 billion barrels of crude, accounting for nearly 61.7 per cent of the world's total recoverable oil reserves.

Most of them, mainly in the Gulf, are pumping billions of dollars to boost capacity to take advantage of the steady growth in demand.

The bulk of the investments are in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which control around 45 per cent of the world's oil and produce more than 17 per cent of the global crude supplies.

But their output of around 12.2 million bpd is far lower than their actual capacity of more than 15 million bpd. The capacity is set to surge by 2000 as they are pressing ahead with plans to develop their giant oilfields.

Despite a steady increase in their capacities, their actual production has remained almost unchanged over the past five years as most of the rise in demand was met by Britain, Norway and other non-OPEC producers.

In 1995, such producers contributed around 1.1 million bpd of the increase in demand of 1.5 million bpd, which pushed total global oil supplies to about 70 million bpd. This meant that the market share of independent producers reached 42.2 million bpd or 60.2 per cent of the total.

"The bulk of the increase in global production is coming from non-OPEC producers as the advanced technology in the oil industry has enabled those countries to upgrade oil extraction levels, cut production costs and start production from previously inaccessible areas," it said.

But OAPEC, which groups oil superpower Saudi Arabia with nine other Arab producers, said output in non-Middle East countries was expected to stabilise after the year 2000 given their limited crude resources.

"This will lead to an increase in demand for oil from the traditional producing areas, especially the Arab region," it said.

"But all such expectations remain dependent on international economic and commercial developments and on the policies of leading consumers in the energy sector, especially the imposition of more taxes on crude consumption and their encouragement of the use of non-oil sources," the report concluded.

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Economic ties bind Asia, Europe

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Foreign ministers from 25 European and Asian countries squabbled here for three days over wide political differences, but the gulf between them has a strong bridge: Economics.

Differences over such issues as human rights in Asia were loudly aired at the meetings which ended here Saturday, but participants stressed both regions want to ensure that trade and investment relations stay on track.

"Cooperation in economic areas has advanced rapidly," said a chairman's statement at the end of the inaugural meeting of foreign ministers from 10 Asian and 15 European countries. The momentum should be increased, the statement continued.

Belgian Foreign Minister Erik Derycke said Asia and Europe were unlikely to find common political ground in a hurry because the two regions were so different, but added that growing business ties would bring them closer.

"It will need a lot of years

before we come to a full cooperation," Mr. Derycke told AFP. "But I think economic cooperation is helping to realise that objective."

"I think basically, whether you want it or not, the material element is very essential in all this," he emphasised.

Europe has lagged behind its traditional trade rivals Japan and the United States in seizing business opportunities offered by Asia's booming markets and its increasingly affluent populations.

European brand names with a presence in Asia range from Pierre Cardin accessories from France to Philips electronics products from the Netherlands.

European companies, more keen on the markets in eastern Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, have a relatively small share of the total foreign direct investment stock in Asia, now in excess of \$250 billion.

The European countries' trade with the booming economies of the seven-

member association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the core group of the Asian side, reached \$99.5 billion in 1995, up from \$75.5 billion in 1994.

But the European Union's 15 members together still could not match the grouping's trade with the United States or Japan despite boasting a bigger combined gross domestic product.

European companies have "concentrated on other areas of the world and they are not as big risk-takers as the Japanese or the Koreans or even the Americans," Philippine Foreign Secretary Domingo Siazon said.

"But they are coming in now, the British, the French..." his Belgian counterpart agreed, saying "more and more" European companies, including Belgian firms, were eyeing Asian markets, with analysts citing slow growth of saturated European markets.

"We are very cautious and careful people," Mr. Derycke said. "We need an assured environment and a

good product and a good understanding of communications and people."

"We are not the kind of people who come and then run away. That's not our way of doing business. We tend to stay, not grab the money and run away," he stressed.

French industry sources said more than 400 companies from that country had a presence in Singapore, and were trying to build a presence across Asia.

Oil giant Total of France has invested heavily in Burma, whose military-ruled junta's alleged human rights abuses dominated the political debate at the foreign ministers' meeting here.

German automaker Volkswagen A.G. is the biggest foreign investor in China, potentially the world's biggest market.

"I think they were behind and they are rapidly trying to catch up," said Tommy Koh, chief executive of the Asia-Europe Foundation, recently set up to promote cultural and academic ties between the two continents.

"There is a huge community of French business people living here. There is a large Scandinavian community here and it is growing every month," he said. "This is something which we welcome."

Amman to host French 'workshop'

AMMAN (J.T.) — With a clear eye on the potential for the hotel industry in Jordan amid growing tourism, French companies are opening a "workshop" on French engineering and hotel equipment in Amman next week.

The three-day event, which opens on Feb. 22, is organised by the commercial section of the French embassy, is the first of several exhibitions and seminars to be organised by the French public and private sectors in Amman in 1997.

This week's gathering will group over a dozen French companies working in the area of kitchen equipment, conference halls, engineering, specialised designs for aquatic

entertainment and health tourism, educational entertainment, housewares, and therapy.

The companies include HML, Betecs, Promotour, Ruels, Score Tourisme, Score International, Cites Des Sciences et de l'Industrie, Jacob Delafon, Villerooy and Boch, Aquatiss, JFTL and Gidmed Somethy.

Eric Duhoo, a senior official of the commercial section of the French embassy here, said the event was organised in close coordination with the French Agency for Tourism Engineering. The workshop and exhibition will be opened by Minister of Tourism Saleh

Irsheidat in a ceremony attended by French Ambassador Bernard Bajot as well as Hughes Parant, director of tourism in France.

Several other French exhibitions and seminars are planned to be held in 1997, most of them organised by the private sector with help from the mission here. Among them is an exhibition of medical equipment.

Several French companies are involved in negotiations with Jordanian businesses on setting up joint ventures in the tourism sector as well as benefiting the local tourism industry with French expertise.

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Be sure to stick to routines today which need your attention. Find some new methods of expressing your creative side later this evening. This is a good time to get together with close friends and have some fun.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Don't try to solve a financial difficulty today without the assistance of an expert who can give you helpful suggestions. A fellow associate could be annoying, however maintain your poise and keep a level head.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Postpone a civic project until later when a good friend can help. This is not a good day today to try changing the details of any agreements or there could be difficulty with those in authority who have other ideas.

MOONCHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Don't let yourself be bothered today by conditions you cannot change or you could make yourself crazed. Be sure you drive carefully when visiting close friends tonight to prevent any adverse conditions.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Don't let small monetary inconsistencies ruin what could be a wonderful day today. Arrange your wardrobe later this evening so you don't have to waste time hunting for specific clothing items and accessories.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 21) Rather than handling a confusing business matter yourself today, take that free advice an expert is offering. Don't lose your temper, especially with your mate or loved ones or you could realise great difficulty.

LIBRA: (September 22 to October 21) A private anxiety could upset you today if you permit, so keep a cool head. An important local person can help find many new business contacts later this evening, so proceed with the suggestions you are given.

SCORPIO: (October 22 to November 21) This is the day today when cooperation should be stressed and disagreements should be avoided at all costs. Labour harmoniously with your mate and you can create a happy environment which you both will enjoy.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) If a close friend has misgivings about a recreation you've chosen today, go along and enjoy yourself. Don't take any risks later this evening where credit is concerned or you could face a difficult situation.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Your career activities can be lightened considerably today if you find ways to be more efficient. This is a good evening for quite discussions with your loved ones and thereby spend considerable time to their company.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Don't permit a friend to irritate you today over some social affair which you are not interested in. If you're not happy with your present situation, find a unique way to change it for the better and thereby become successful.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) A person who has power over your interests today can make you feel inferior, so try to avoid this person if it is all possible. Be very cautious while driving on the highway and thereby avoid any difficulties.

Birthstone of February: Amethyst — Onyx.

REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.8870	0.8187	1.4835	124.30	1.3482	1681.25	1.8955	5.6885	
DE Mark	0.9928		0.3652	0.8075	73.68	0.7889	384.44	1.2135	3.3718
GB Sterling	1.6215	2.7380		2.3641	201.45	2.1881	2693.72	3.0738	6.2239
CH Franc	0.6833	1.1519	0.4208		84.91	0.3206	1134.35	2.2931	1.2845
JP Yen	0.0080	1.3881	0.4954	1.1764		1.0938	13.35	152.37	4.5727
CA Dollar	0.7417	1.2334	0.4506	1.0558	1.00		1209.40	1.3850	4.1813
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0152	0.3709	0.8881	1337.97	0.8113		11.41	3.4222
NL Guilder	0.5276	88.88	0.3251	77.21	65.54	0.7111	876.19		3.0063
FR Franc	0.1758	0.2985	0.1083	25.7163	21.83	0.2363	33.31	33.3100	

Energy		USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
Brent	21.15	20.85				
N. Tena	22.35	22.05				
Bony	21.15	20.85				
Dubai	19.00	18.50				
Utl Gas	204.00	204.00				

Mid-East Currencies						
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	
SA Riyal	0.2667	0.4500	0.1644	0.3903	33.73	
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.4594	0.1679	0.3927	33.78	
KW Dinar	3.2954	5.5617	2.0325	4.8225	410.80	
BH Dinar	0.3776	4.4728	1.6363	3.8259	320.53	
CY Pound	1.9773	3.3357	1.2187	2.8938	245.77	

Metal Prices			Bid	Offer
Gold (oz)	344.6	345.1		
Silver (oz)	5.25	5.27		
Platinum (oz)	367.5	368.5		
AL (3 Months)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CU (3 Months)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Zinc (3 Months)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lead (3 Months)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
NI (3 Months)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)						
Period	-1-	-3-	-6-	-9-	-12-	Year
USD	5.28	5.37	5.43	5.53	5.65	
GBP	6.06	6.18	6.30	6.44	6.62	
JPY	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.40	0.50	
DEM	3.12	3.13	3.11	3.05	3.07	
FRF	3.18	3.21	3.20	3.21	3.22	
CHF	1.56	1.57	1.57	1.63	1.68	
ITL	7.40	7.23	6.97	6.79	6.67	

Main Equity Indices						
Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low
New York	DOW JONES	6988.96	-33.46	-0.48	7024.75	6983.95
New York	S&P 500	806.48	-3.34	-0.41	812.2	803.15
London	FT-SE 100	4341	13.9	0.32	4353.4	4327.9
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	18722	33.94	0.18	18880.0	18608.0
Paris	CAC 40	2627.42	-0.99	-0.04	2643.98	2616.94
Frankfurt	DAX	3248.18	-18.7	-0.58	3280.94	3244.95

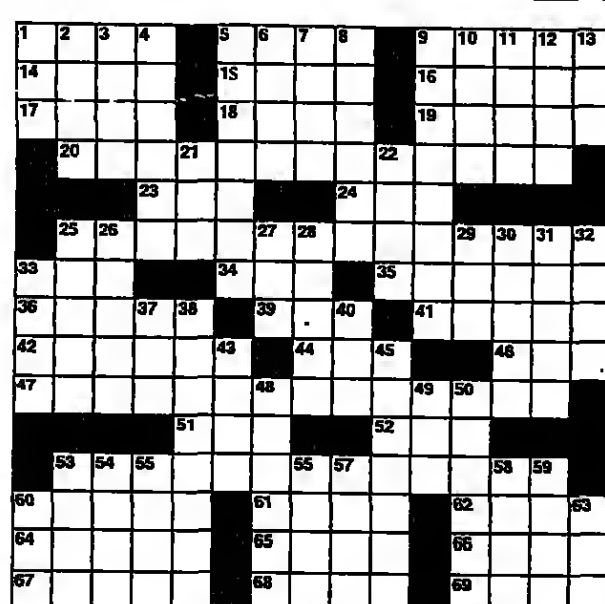
Energy			Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lb)	176.75		Spot	
Soybean (c/lb)	1280		Spot	
Sugar (c/lb)	308		Spot	
Wheat (c/lb)	132		Spot	
Soya (c/lb)	22.17		Spot	
Yes (c/lb)	137		Spot	
Barley (c/lb)	22		Spot	
Rice (c/lb)	470		Spot	

JOD Cross Rates			
Currency	Buy	Sell	
US Dollar	0.708	0.710	
GB Sterling	0.418	0.420	
DE Mark	0.266	0.268	
CH Franc	0.320	0.322	
FR Franc	0.1243	0.1249	
JP Yen	0.5683	0.5701	
NL Guilder	0.3731	0.375	
IT Lira	0.426	0.428	

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

THE Daily Crossword

- ACROSS**
- 1 Selves
 - 5 Perot
 - 9 One who sciggles
 - 14 Baine
 - 15 "Rhythm"
 - 16 Range
 - 17 Baghdad's land
 - 18 Feeling low
 - 19 Lily kin
 - 20 Fels Domino hit
 - 23 "Who am — judge?"
 - 24 Shoe width
 - 25 "The —" (old hit tune)
 - 33 Abner
 - 34 Hot Springs feature
 - 35 Physician
 - 36 Tavern term
 - 39 Ring decision
 - 41 Cubic meter
 - 42 Samovar kin
 - 44 Sounds of hesitation
 - 46 Wall climber
 - 47 Hit song by "The Band"
 - 51 Wair
 - 52 Author Anals
 - 53 Mongo
 - 54 Santamie hit song
 - 60 Strength
 - 61 Actress Moran
 - 62 Parly open
 - 64 "— of Two Cities"
 - 65 Small
 - 66 Record
 - 67 Particle
 - 68 Apear
 - 69 Test



by Kenneth Witte

02/07/96

47 Hit song by "The Band"

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54 Santamie hit song

60 Strength

61 Actress Moran

62 Parly open

64 "— of Two Cities"

65 Small

66 Record

67 Particle

68 Apear

69 Test

DOWN

1 Yale student

2 Attire

3 Elipse

4 Dress ornament

5 Military awards

6 Leer

7 Feevish

8 Sound system

9 Lovers of beauty: var.

10 Needle case

11 Dipop

12 Wicked

13 Fibbed fabric

21 Greek vowel

22 Casual consent

25 Paris

26 psychologist

27 Sacrificial site

27 Likely

28 Pastry chief

29 Posed

30 Fat component

31 Gall

32 "Riders of the Purple Sage" author

33 Real estate units

37 Psychologists' org.

38 Like some doughnuts

40 NHL great

43 Sider's law

45 Dictionary entry

48 Ants, old style

49 Triumph

50 Cell dweller

53 In the company of

54 Seaweed

55 Lacquered metalware

56 NY canal

57 Queue

58 Greek warrior

59 — Valley, CA

60 Duet

63 Radiation unit

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



Business
New c
to fill
health

Ministry of L
Egyptian lab

Profits of public
rise dur

THE BETTER

Okay, if I
what

JUMBI

LAMEY

TYREN

RAJ

New company launched to fill gap in Jordan's health care insurance

By Sacha Baggili
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A group of health insurance professionals has banded together to form a new company designed to fill a gap in this relatively new sector in Jordan.

MAGNET, or the Arab-German Company for Managing Health Insurance, is ready to assist insurance firms and corporations which provide health insurance to their employees

with some third party professional help, according to MAGNET General Manager Jamil Odeh.

A study of the medical insurance market in Jordan by the company's founding committee, found that there was a need for third party professional participation in the system, Dr. Odeh told the Jordan Times.

According to Dr. Odeh, health care insurance claims have been falling into the hands of people with no knowledge of the medical

world, and have also been causing unnecessary headaches for accountants of companies which provide employee health insurance.

He said MAGNET makes use of sophisticated computer technology in its management systems. Consultation services, he said, include helping clients "set plans and policies which match their budget and requirements."

MAGNET's major corporate shareholders are the Arab-German Insurance Company (a Jordanian-German partnership established last year), the Saudi United Medical Group, Washington Health Care, International Cyprus Company, and individual shareholders include Mohammad Hurani, who Saturday was elected President of MAGNET, Zakaria Abu Khalaf, Nazir Bate' and Jamil Odeh.

The capital of the company stands at JD 2 million, 25 per cent of which has already been covered.

According to Dr. Odeh the remainder will have to be provided only in the event that the company reaches its final and long-term objective which is "to build and own medical facilities."

Other members elected to the board are Atef Qundus, Zareef Bradie, Reimari and Ruyter German and Saeed Taa'ni.

Historic telecoms deal signed in Geneva

GENEVA (AFP) — Sixty-eight countries signed a historic agreement at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Saturday liberalising global telecommunications markets which are set to ring up sales of over a trillion dollars by 2000.

The deal, which caps almost three years of negotiations, will produce hundreds of billions of dollars in savings and better services for consumers and provide a slew of juicy investment possibilities for expansion-minded firms.

"This is a very good deal," U.S. Deputy Trade Representative Jeffrey Lang told reporters after the gavel went down at the final session of the basic telecommunications group negotiating the accord.

"It is a good omen for financial services talks," which are due to resume in April.

Negotiators easily met the midnight deadline to give their seal of approval.

The agreement is a victory for the WTO, which managed the talks and which is pursuing service liberalisation with a vengeance.

"We are tonight celebrating a very important victory. We have almost accomplished the 21st century round which will be completed with the forthcoming agreement on information technology products," WTO Director General Renato Ruggiero told journalists.

"Not all decisions have been easy, but in the end member governments put their faith in the multilateral process of the WTO and the WTO has delivered."

"This agreement promotes liberalisation and it gives certainty, security and predictability through a clear set of rules. This is particularly valuable when rapid growth and technological

developments are changing the face of the telecoms industry and the world economy," he added.

The 68 countries that are market-opening is double the number that signed on in April when the United States killed a deal because it insisted there lacked a "critical mass."

The agreement covers basic services such as voice telephony, fax, telex as well as satellites, mobile and cellular activities and private communications services.

The extent to which participants have committed to open up their markets varies. The United States, which is the world's largest telecoms market, is offering a wide-open playing field to all comers.

India and other countries are restricting foreign investment in their domestic telecoms sector to 25 per cent while phased liberalisation is also a feature of many offers tabled.

Argentina at the last minute

decided to take back its proposal, but it could come on board at a later date.

Countries cannot water down their offers or renege on their pledges, European Commissioner Leon Brittan said, adding that market opening measures from now on could "only get better."

Actual liberalisation is slated to take effect from Jan. 1, 1998. Savings to consumers through cheaper phone and fax bills could reach one trillion dollars over ten years, Mr. Ruggiero said, adding that the deal would help bring families together.

The gains for users will not be identical however. In the United States, which boasts the world's most liberalised telecoms sector along with Britain, savings will be slimmer than for people used to uncompetitive, allegedly monopolies.

"This is good news for firms which in the aggregate spend more on telecoms services than

they do on oil," Mr. Ruggiero said.

The growth forecasts have industry players salivating.

Worldwide, the telecommunications sector posted sales of around \$670 billion in 1996, and that is just for services. Trade, covering equipment and settlement payments, added another one hundred billion dollars to the tally.

Telecommunications services could post revenues of \$1.2 trillion by 2000 and equipment sales another \$200 billion, according to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), based in Geneva.

The deal will quicken the demise of monopoly operators, still common in most parts of the developing world and after expensive accounting rate regimes.

Countries that resist the trend towards cheaper telecoms services will be pressured by businesses to come on line and risk being side-stepped by

investors if they refuse to budge.

Industrialising countries in Asia, South America and Africa present the most mouth watering opportunities.

Some emerging nations are posting growth rates in telephone lines, equipment imports and cellular services double, or triple those of rich countries.

For instance, industrialised countries saw average annual growth rate in telephone lines in 1990-95 of only 3.5 per cent, compared with 13.8 per cent for developing countries.

In poorer countries where a degree of competition already exists, international phone traffic has risen an average 4.3 per cent a year since 1990. In countries with monopoly regimes, the figure was an average of 5.6 per cent, according to the ITU.

The agreement will lead to even an even greater pace of privatisations, mergers and alliances than has already taken place, experts predict.

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Ministry of Labour willing to help Egyptian labourers return home

** LABOUR MINISTER Abdel Hafez Al Shakhaneh expressed willingness to exempt Egyptian labourers from paying penalty fines for work and residence permits violations if the number of those labourers was large and if the payment of violation fines was the only reason impeding their return to their home country.

The minister said officials at the Egyptian embassy have contacted his ministry and held meetings with Jordanian officials to discuss facilitating the travel of a large number of Egyptian workers who wish to return home but do not have enough money to pay the penalty fines for having violated the residence and work permits law. Dr. Shakhaneh added that the Egyptian embassy does not have the (financial) capability to pay the fines on behalf of the violating workers.

Dr. Shakhaneh stressed that the ministry has no objection to exempt large numbers of Egyptian workers from paying the fines to enable them leave Jordan. He indicated that the government has shown understanding and cooperation with the Egyptian embassy in Amman to solve the problem of paying the fines which amount to JD150 for each labourer who did obtain a work permit.

Large number of Egyptian labourers have recently approached the embassy to help them return home as they were unable to leave Jordan because of the problem of paying the fines (Al Aswaq).

Profits of public shareholding companies rise during first half of '96

** A STUDY prepared recently by the Amman Financial Market shows that public shareholding companies listed at the stock exchange have boosted their half-year profits by 15 per cent as their total profits at the end of June 1996 increased by JD18.1 million.

The total profits of the companies reached JD140.1 million at midyear. Of the total, JD77.3 million were posted by the banking sector, JD 48.6 million by the industrial sector, JD 11.2 million by the services sector and JD3.2 million by the insurance sector.

Profits recorded by the Arab Bank, the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company and the Arab Potash Company have largely contributed to the increase in the 1996 midyear profits (Al Ra'i).

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AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHMEISANI											
TELEPHONE: 601711 - 601719											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 16/02/1997											
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	COMPANY'S NAME	P / F	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE		
266,000	ARAB BANK	14.3	1.34	3	1040	272520	263.50	262.00	1.50		
4,780	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	F	0.00	1	500	950	1.8	1.80	.09		
3,660	BANK OF JORDAN	12.3	0.00	4	390	1331	3.4	3.41	-		
1,830	NATL. PORTFOLIO	5.5	5.78	3	1150	3254	2.46	2.41	.03		
5,250	THE HOUSING BK.	13.0	2.83	3	488	2376	4.90	4.87	.03		
2,950	JOR. KUMAT BANK	20.1	0.00	4	1097	3067	2.81	2.80	.01		
1,090	JOR. CUST. BANK	5.7	7.37	18	15700	14915	.96	.95	.01		
4,180	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	19.2	0.00	1	100	1200	4.04	4.00	.04		
BANK SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 700.13	CHANGE: -0.30			75	20865	299617					
1,830	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	11.6	7.19	9	7750	12866	1.64	1.67	.03		
2,880	SHIPPING LINES	10.4	8.13	1	100	246	2.45	2.46	.01		
1,580	NATL. PORTFOLIO	5.5	0.00	35	21650	27647	1.30	1.27	.03		
1,050	REAL ESTATE INV.	21.3	3.88	1	250	240	.96	.96	-		
3,720	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	13.7	5.76	5	775	2688	2.50	3.47	.03		
2,230	UNIFIED CO.	11.1	4.74	18	15500	11660	1.14	2.21	.03		
1,200	UNION LAND DEV.	K	0.00	4	4000	3320	.84	.83	.01		
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 117.13	CHANGE: -0.25			71	40075	58667					
3,730	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	19.7	2.87	22	1417	27491	3.42	3.40	.02		
3,500	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	75.0	0.00	1	1500	1508	3.6	3.35	.03		
6,030	ARAB POTASH CO.	18.2	3.33	3	900	5404	6.03	6.01	.02		
10,400	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.1	7.99	14	997	9978	10.02	10.01	.01		
1,590	MOOLEN INDUSTRIES	59.9	0.00	17	5800	7755	1.33	1.35	.02		
1,520	INDUSTRIAL CONGR.	37.6	0.00	3	1100	3080	2.85	2.80	.05		
7,950	JOR. WORTER MILLS	8.9	3.59	1	600	4182	7.00	6.97	.03		
4,500	ARAB PHARM. MARF.	21.4	5.14	35	6784	26339	3.94	3.89	.05		
6,970	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	9.0	3.45	7	3900	78102	6.87	7.25	.38		
2,420	JORDAN DAIRY	13.8	6.67	2	122	275	2.22	2.25	.03		
2,310	JOR. PIPES MANFACT.	9.0	7.36	4	1250	2028	1.60	1.63	.03		
3,310	CENTRAL MILKING	6.4	12.00	1	300	750	2.62	2.50	.12		
7,130	OK ALDAMA OV. INV.	11.7	4.00	13	4100	20543	5.08	5.00	.08		
960	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	K	0.00	22	49500	29700	.91	.90	.01		
3,420	ARAB PAPER COV. TRD.	8.2	8.63	3	1200	1440	1.19	1.20	.01		
1,020	NATIONAL INDUS.	17.1	8.87	7	5950	3922	.67	.68	.01		
1,540	INTERED. PETRO. CHEM.	K	0.00	4	7500	1375	1.11	1.10	.01		
1,250	JOR. MOCHMOOL INDOS.	K	0.00	2	350	282	.80	.80	.00		
1,670	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	9.0	0.00	80	43150	68516	1.61	1.60	.01		
2,950	UNIV. MOCH. INDOS.	5.4	11.30	31	12450	21831	1.74	1.77	.03		
1,850	JOR. INDUS. RESOURCES	17.5	0.00	21	16000	22170	1.41	1.39	.02		
1,280	ARAB NEW CABLE CO.	7.4	0.00	7	2412	2267	.94	.94	.00		
2,450	EL. EAY READY WEAR	K	0.00	7	1740	3299	3.90	3.89	.01		
1,370	INTL. TOBACCO	28.9	0.00	19	17350	21400	1.24	1.23	.01		
1,470	UNION CH. & VEG.	25.9	0.00	25	11050	11473	1.04	1.05	.01		
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 118.97	CHANGE: -0.37			357	196628	325378					
GRAND TOTAL											
INDEX: 157.12	CHANGE: -0.32			455	257518	663457					
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 16/02/1997											
780	JOR. TRADE FAC.	16.0	0.00	19	38500	23100	.61	.60	.01		
850	UNION INV. 50	58.0	0.00	2	1600	352	.72	.72	-		
910	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	K	0.00	27	56400	26785	.48	.47	.01		
760	ARAB FOOD & MED.	K	0.00	10	9462	5982	.64	.62	.02		
1,690	NATL. CHOLINE	K	0.00	2	2950	4199	1.43	1.42	.01		
690	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	K	0.00	29	50900	25445	.49	.50	.01		
840	NATL. TEXTILE	K	0.00	8	3350	3843	.56	.55	.01		
850	NATL. WOL. IND. MANICO	K	0.00	9	5750	2853	.51	.50	.01		
690	JAYKAL DIES & MOULDS	K	0.00	26	31600	20047	.62	.63	.01		
990	JORDAN STEEL	K	0.00	4	2582	2012	.78	.78	-		
760	JORDAN PAPER COV. TRD.	K	0.00	1	1000	390	.64	.64	-		
770	HAZI PEASH. 65	K	0.00	16	17977	4835	.63	.62	.01		
730	INDS. ENG.	28.3	0.00	25	42400	19607	.46	.46	-		
1,020	ARAB INT. FOOD FACT.	66.7	0.00	0	400	380	.95	.95	-		
950	IND. EAST COMPLEX	7.9	0.00	20	31050	20809	.67	.67	.01		
GRAND TOTAL											
				200	295899	158638					

1 : New 32 months high
H : New 12 months high
M : Listed during the past 12 months
P : P/E ratio is 100 or more
G : Negative P/E
S : Selling in zero or N/A for the most recent year

THE BETTER HALF.



"Okay, if I learn to be less selfish, what will you give me?"

JUMBLE.

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

LAMEY

TYREN

RAJEBB

YIHRTT

Print answer here: (Answers tomorrow)

Rusedski stuns Agassi in California

SAN JOSE (R) — Britain's Greg Rusedski served notice that he is ready to challenge the game's elite after stunning Andre Agassi 6-3 6-4 Saturday in the semifinals of the \$303,000 Sybase Open.

Rusedski, ranked 39th, will meet No. 1 Pete Sampras in Sunday's final.

On Saturday, Sampras coolly dissected his friend Todd Martin 6-2 6-3.

Rusedski's impressive victory over the game's best returner followed his straight 3-1 quarterfinal stomping of No. 2 Michael Chang on Thursday.

Known primarily as the 'fastest server on the Tour,' Rusedski said that if he were to beat Sampras tomorrow, it would prove to the world that he is no longer a one-shot wonder.

"That would establish me as a true threat to anybody," said Rusedski, who had never won a set off of a Agassi in three meetings prior to Saturday. "Nobody could say I'm a fluke if I beat Chang. Agassi and Sampras in a row."

In December, Rusedski and coach Brian Teacher spent 27 straight days in Los Angeles working four hours per session, hitting topspin backhands and return of serves.

"We even worked on Christmas," Rusedski said. "And it really paid off."

It was Rusedski's variety on his serve, pinpoint volleying and low backhand slice that enabled him to break down number three seed Agassi.

Rusedski fired 14 aces to Agassi's none and fought



Andre Agassi

off three out of Agassi's five break point chances by stubbornly engaging in crosscourt spinis from the back court.

Rusedski's serve was clocked at 139 miles an hour (217 kph).

He broke Agassi in the first set at 3-2 in a 10-ball rally from the baseline and then broke him at 2-2 in the second set with a down-the-line forehand return winner.

"I favour myself indoors against anybody," said Rusedski, who is enamoured with the San Jose arena, where he has yet to be broken this week. "I rallied well with Andre. He didn't expect my ground

game to be so good."

Although Agassi said Rusedski has improved his service selection, he isn't convinced yet that he has the good to make it as an elite player.

"It depends on what he's trying to accomplish," Agassi said. "If you beat a guy like Chang and me back to back, sure, that is going to a lot for your confidence. But it is one thing to win a tournament one week and another to be able to play that well all year."

"If Brad Gilbert, Agassi's coach had served that well, he could win this tournament."

While there were few dra-

matic moments in Sampras' victory over Martin, Sampras stirred up the crowd when he achieved a career first — knocking down an official with an ace that careened off centre line man's Ken Ordenez's head.

"That was a first," Sampras joked. "I saw a lawsuit coming."

Ordenez was not injured. Sampras, the 1996 Australian Open champion, won 78 percent of the points on his serve, and had Martin tripping over himself in an attempt to read which way Sampras was going.

"I could have done more than I did today," said Martin, the number 4 seed. "Against Pete, you have to put close to your best foot forward."

"I could have hit my forehand better, my backhand better, my volleys, my serve, everything but my overhead, but I only had to hit one of those."

Martin said he lost control of the match from the opening gun.

"Pete asserts himself right off the bat and I was doing the responding rather than the dictating. I'm not used to that," Martin said.

Sampras, the defending Sybase Open champion and 1997 Australian Open champion, is looking to become the first person to repeat as the Sybase champion since John McEnroe in 1979.

"When you can start off the year by winning a grand slam, it makes me relax and I can have fun playing in the States," Sampras said.

Forest out as Chesterfield reach FA Cup semis

LONDON (AFP) — Nottingham Forest boss Stuart Pearce blasted his players after they were knocked out of the FA Cup by Chesterfield in one of the biggest upsets in the competition's history Saturday.

Forest, the 1978 and 1979 European Cup Winners, crashed to a 1-0 defeat by the second division Minnows at Saltergate — English football's oldest ground — as Chesterfield reached the first quarter-final in their history.

Chesterfield not only beat their famous Premiership opponents but dominated them for most of the match and left caretaker-manager Pearce in a fury with his players.

Pearce stormed: "The bottom line was that we were beaten by a team that wanted to win the game more than we did. Everyone at this club should feel let down."

The decisive goal for the second division club, which almost went bankrupt 10 years ago, came when Tom Curtis converted a 54th minute penalty after Welsh international goalkeeper Mark Crossley had been sent off for tripping.

"To be in the last eight of the biggest knock-out competition of the world is incredible for a place like Chesterfield," said manager John Duncan, the former Spurs star.

Chairman Barry Hubbard, who saved the club in 1987 said: "What we have gained in stature is something you can't put a value on."

It's immense both for the town and the club."

But Forest were not the only side to suffer on a day of shocks with Leeds crashing 3-2 at home to First Division Portsmouth and giant-killers Wrexham of the Second Division disposing of first division high-fliers Birmingham.

For Portsmouth manager Terry Fenwick, Swedish sensation Mathias Svensson, who scored one brilliant goal and set up another, was the inspiration behind their shock win.

The 22-year-old striker arrived for a paltry 75,000 pounds from Swedish First Division champions Ulfsborg and Fenwick claimed: "He must be the bargain of the season."

"We've got to curb his aggression a little bit but he's got a lot of potential."

"It was a magnificent performance and I felt we thoroughly deserved to win," Fenwick added.

Leeds boss George Graham made no excuses for his side's flat performance, saying: "I think the 3-2 score line flattered us. We were ready for them. What I wasn't ready for, and what I didn't expect, was so many Leeds players

playing way below par."

Wrexham manager Brian Flynn hailed his side's latest giant-killing act as the Welsh Minnows celebrated a stunning 3-1 at Birmingham to follow their shock win at Premiership side West Ham in the fourth round.

Flynn said: "It was a memorable day and even better than West Ham in terms of a performance."

"The win at West Ham was fairy-tale stuff but this was better in terms of the way we performed and we were a credit to the Second Division."

Premiership basement club Middlesbrough, already in the League Cup semi-finals, booked a place in the last eight of the fa cup with a 1-0 win at First Division Manchester City with a goal from Brazilian ace Juninho.

With more big names following Liverpool, Manchester United, Everton, Arsenal, Newcastle, Aston Villa and Tottenham out of the competition, Middlesbrough boss Bryan Robson cast a cautious eye towards Wembley.

"We can't get too carried away, but with Forest going out at Chesterfield, Leeds being beaten by Portsmouth, and Chelsea and Leicester playing each other tomorrow the competition is there for the winning," he said.

Coventry secured their place in the fifth round for the first time since they won the trophy in 1987 with a 2-1 win at Premiership rivals Blackburn.

Coventry manager Gordon Strachan believed the triumph will have silenced some of their critics after needing two matches to scrape past non-league Woking in the last round.

He said: "My players are happy they beat a good side and that they answered questions about their ability to compete."

Premiership high-fliers Wimbledon, who are also in the League Cup semi-finals, maintained their remarkable season by moving into the last eight with a 2-1 win over QPR, secured by Robbie Earle's 150th senior goal.

Meanwhile, Arsenal missed their chance of going top in the Premiership after they were held to a goalless draw by Tottenham in the North London Derby at White Hart Lane.

In the Premiership's other match, a second-half penalty by Croatian midfielder Aljosa Asanovic gave Derby their first Premiership victory in 11 matches.



The crew of the yacht 'Save the Children' wave to spectators as they enter Sydney Harbour to win the Wellington to Sydney leg of the 48,000 kilometre round-the-world Global Challenge race. 'Save the Children' came from 11th to first place overnight due to favourable winds, with the overall points race leader 'Gramp 4' still yet to finish the leg (Reuters photo)

Christie burns off youngsters in Australian sprint

HOBART (AFP) — Linford Christie powered home to win the 100 metres at an Australian Grand Prix athletics meet Sunday in 10.30secs.

The 1992 Barcelona Olympic champion defeated Australian Steve Brimacombe (10.45secs) with Belgian Patrick Stevens and New Zealander Gus Nketia dead-heating for third in 10.48.

The 36-year-old British grandfather, who was sensationally disqualified from the 100m final at last year's Atlanta Olympics for making a second false start, said thoughts of retirement were the last thing on his mind.

"I'm still training hard and using this Australian summer to see places I've not seen before," Christie said after his victory.

"It's my first trip to Hobart and the crowd was fantastic — I'm happy I can still keep the youngsters at bay."

Christie looked under threat from Brimacombe and Stevens at the halfway down the straight but moved up a gear to be a clear winner at the finish.

Christie later anchored the British 4x100m relay team to a Smart win in 39.58, well ahead of new south Wales and Australian under-23 teams.

Christie's presence helped swell the Hobart crowd to 6,000.

American sprint hurdling legends, Jack Pierce and



Linford Christie from Great Britain crosses the finish line to win the 100-metre race at the Grand Prix series in Hobart. The 36-year-old Christie, a Barcelona Olympic gold medalist, won in a time of 10.30 seconds (Reuters photo)

Roger Kingdom, beat home Australian champion Kyle Vander-Kuyp in the 110m hurdles.

Pierce narrowly broke Vander-Kuyp's meet record of 13.60 in edging out dual Olympic gold medalist Kingdom in 13.59, with Vander-Kuyp a close third.

Kenyan Paul Bitok out-sprinted Australian Darren Wilson in the 3,000m in 7min 50.52 with Ugandan

Godfrey Nyomhi in third spot.

Australian Kate Anderson continued her improvement with a sparkling 8:48.48 win in the women's 3,000m beating Irish world champion Sonia O'Sullivan.

American Eric Thomas was too slick for the Aussies, former Syrian Zid Ahou Hamed and Rohan Robinson in the 400m hurdles, clocking 49.52.

FISA cut rowing numbers for Sydney Olympics

SYDNEY (AFP) — The International Rowing Federation here Sunday said it would be retaining 14 events for the 2000 Sydney Olympics, but was committed to cutting the number of competitors.

At an extraordinary congress of the Federation Internationale Des Societes D'aviron (FISA), held here over the last four days, FISA president Denis Oswald said his body had to cut the number of rowers by 50 to 550.

Oswald said FISA might also have to reduce the number of boats to reach the quota.

Oswald said while the Sydney Games would have the same number of events as Atlanta last year, the actual program would not be decided until its next congress at the world championships in Aiguebelette, France.

The Sydney course at Penrith received positive reports from FISA officials, who said it was well ahead of previous Olympic rowing venues.

"It's certainly one of the best courses in the world. Comments made by delegates were very positive," said Oswald.

Sydney organising committee Olympic Games (SOCOG) officials met FISA's technical staff during the week and FISA Secretary-General Matt Smith said SOCOG's organisation was much further advanced than any other Olympic Games he had experienced.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Klinsmann strikes twice, Bayern stay top

BONN (R) — Germany captain Juergen Klinsmann struck twice as Bayern Munich started the second half of the German league season with a 3-0 home victory over St Pauli Saturday to stay top of the table. Klinsmann, who was often criticised in the first half of the season for his lack of sharpness in front of goal, scored in the 28th and 75th minutes in the Bavarians' first game since the two-month winter break. German international defender Thomas Helmer scored the other goal for Bayern in the 53rd minute. Bayern kept a two-point lead over reigning champions Borussia Dortmund who also opened the second half of the season in style with a 3-1 defeat of Bayer Leverkusen.

Pele treated like royalty in Costa Rica visit

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica (R) — Edson Arantes Do Nascimento, the Brazilian soccer legend better known as Pele, has been mobbed by thousands of adoring Costa Ricans fans since his arrival here Friday. Pele is in Costa Rica to preside over the closing ceremonies on Saturday of the XIX national sporting games involving more than 3,800 young Costa Rican athletes and wherever he goes crowds gather wanting to see him, touch him or ask for his autograph. Among those fortunate enough to meet Pele was Jose Alberto Lacayo Zamora, a 16-year-old student who has been writing him for eight years. "I don't have words to describe how I feel right now," Lacayo told a news conference. In an interview with a local newspaper Pele criticised the current crop of soccer stars for playing only for the money. "In my time we played for the love of the team or the country, but now the players are in it for money, changing from club to club, playing for the highest bidder," Pele said in an interview published Saturday in La Nacion. "There are some things in life that money can't buy."

Australian boxing champ charged

CANBERRA (R) — Former triple world boxing champion Jeff Fenech has been charged with obscene language and wilful damage to a police car after a disturbance on Australia's surfers Paradise tourist area, police said Sunday. Fenech was arrested on Saturday after police were called to a house in surfers Paradise, in northern Queensland State, police said. He is due to appear in a local court within two weeks. A spokesman for Fenech later told local reporters the former champion-super-bantamweight title in 1987 and the WBC featherweight title in 1988.

TODAY AT

CINEMA TEL:634144

PHILADELPHIA "1"

Dennis Quaid, David Thewlis & Sean Connery..... in

DRAGON HEART

Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:634144

PHILADELPHIA "2"

LAYLA ALAWI & MOHAMMAD HNEIDI..IN

HALLA HOUSH

(ARABIC)

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:699238

PLAZA

Adel Imam, Shireen & Saeed Saleh

Bakhit Wa Adilah (2)

Al Jardal Walkankah

Shows: 12:00, 2:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:677420

CONCORD

CONCORD "1"

Bakhit Wa Adilah (2)

Al Jardal Walkankah

Shows: 12:15, 2:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CONCORD "2"

now on daily

"Custom Made Citizen"

The satirical play starring Mousa Hijazin

Nabil & Hisham's Theatre

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CLOSED UNTIL MARCH 1 FOR

MAINTENANCE

& REDECORATION

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Aman.. Ya Ho

MIAMI (R) — Miami Heat scored 12 points in the third quarter to lead the Miami Heat to a 101-90 victory over the Philadelphia 76ers Sunday.

Ashraf Ahmad also scored 24 points, Tim Lincecum added 15 and 14 assists.

Kyle Stackhouse added 14 points, 10 rebounds and Don McLean added 10 points.

Philadelphia's third quarter lead was cut to 10 points and the Heat scored 14 points in the fourth quarter to seal the victory.

In New York, the Knicks won 101-90 over the Nets, with Shaquille O'Neal leading the Knicks with 34 points, 14 rebounds and 10 blocks.

Alvin Robertson led the Nets with 24 points, 11 rebounds and 11 assists.

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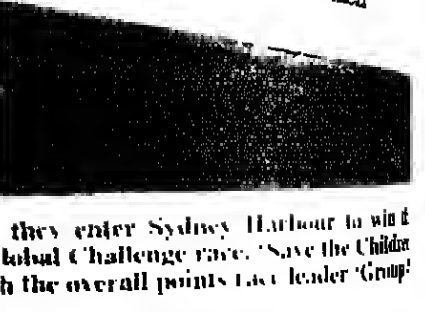
Alvin Robertson led the Nets with 24 points, 11 rebounds and 11 assists.

show pal...
manager Brian Flynn...
Birmingham...
West Ham...
"It was a memorable day...
terms of a performance...
West Ham was...
is of the way we performed...
second Division...
basement club...
earn Finals...
big names following Liverpool, Manchester...

high fliers...
Wimbledon...
Arsenal...
up after they were held...
North London Derby...
midfielder...
victory in 11 matches...



they enter Sydney Harbour to win the overall points...



RIEF

Man...
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Nabil & Hisham's Theatre
THE THEATRE WILL BE
CLOSED UNTIL MARCH 15
& REDECORATION
WE WILL BE BACK WITH
Aman.. Ya Ho

Sports

Miami beat Philadelphia

MIAMI (R) — Alonzo Mourning scored 12 of his 24 points in the third quarter as the Miami Heat won their ninth straight game a 125-99 victory over the Philadelphia 76ers Saturday.

Voshon Lenard also scored 24 points. Tim Hardaway added 15 and 13 assists.

Jerry Stackhouse scored 24 points and Don MacLean added 20 for Philadelphia, which lost its third straight road game and fell to 6-19 away from home. Leading scorer Allen Iverson did not play in the first quarter for disciplinary reasons and finished with 13 points.

In Milwaukee, Vin Baker had 21 points and 11 rebounds and Ray Allen added 15 points as the Milwaukee Bucks won their third straight game, 92-87 over the slumping Denver Nuggets.

Allen made a 20-footer to give the Nuggets the lead for good, 84-83, with 1:35 remaining and followed 42 seconds later with a 14-footer.

Glenn Robinson had 14 points and Armon Gilliam recorded 11 points and 12 rebounds for Milwaukee.

Laphonso Ellis scored 22 points for the Nuggets.

At New Jersey, Khalid Reeves scored 23 points and Kendall Gill added 22 as the New Jersey Nets pulled away for a 107-86 victory over the Washington Bullets.

Shawn Bradley and Kerry Kittles each scored 14 points for the Nets, with all of Bradley's points coming in the second half.

New Jersey won for just the fourth time in 12 games.

In Portland, Kenny Anderson scored a season-high 35 points and Isaiah Rider added 26, including four crucial free throws in the final 10 seconds, as the Portland Trail Blazers edged the Houston Rockets, 109-105.

Rider grabbed a rebound of a missed Brent Price jumper with 9.8 seconds left and was fouled. He made both free throws and, after



Portland Trail Blazers Chris Dudley (L) attempts to block the shot of Houston Rockets Hakeem Olajuwon (R) during the first quarter of their game. Portland won 109-105.

Hakeem Olajuwon sank a pair from the line. Rider made two more free throws with five-tenths of a second to go, sealing the win.

"I'm confident at the line," Rider said. "I was glad I got fouled and could put it away."

In San Antonio, Steve Smith had 25 points and Mookie Blaylock scored nine of his 21 during a second-quarter run as the Atlanta Hawks routed the puncheon San Antonio Spurs, 109-89, to sweep the season series.

Christian Laettner had 17 points and 12 rebounds and Henry James and Alan Henderson each had 14 points for Atlanta.

In Dallas, Jeff Hornacek scored 18 points and John Stockton added 17 as the Utah Jazz won their fifth straight game and continued their home dominance of the Dallas Mavericks, 99-84.

Karl Malone, who sat out the final 20 minutes, added 15 points for Utah, which improved to 23-2 at home this season. The Jazz broke open a tight game with a 12-0 run at the end of the first quarter.

Greg Ostertag chipped in with 13 points and 12 rebounds for the Jazz.

"Well it looked like we caught a team that was a little short-handed," Utah coach Jerry Sloan said.

"They had a tough time making some shots. I don't know that we guarded them that well in some stretches but it was a win."

Champion Ivanisevic beats Novaka

DUBAI (R) — Defending champion Goran Ivanisevic repulsed a determined challenge from unseeded Jiri Novak on Saturday to win 6-1, 3-6, 6-3 and earn a place in the final of the \$1 million Dubai Tennis Open.

Serving deep and forcing Novak to err on his back hand, top seed Ivanisevic, ranked second in the world, raced to a 3-0 lead with a break in the second game. He consolidated his position with another break in the sixth to win the first set almost without raising a sweat.

But then in the second set, Ivanisevic's serve seemed to desert him and the 67th ranked Czech clawed his way heck into the match. He broke the Croatian's serve to go 5-3 ahead and comfortably served out the set.

Novak, who beat Australian open finalist Carlos Moya in the first round, maintained the pressure in the deciding set. But he failed to capitalise on two break points and it was Ivanisevic who made the decisive break to win the final set 6-3.

In the final, Ivanisevic will face the winner of the other semifinal between Thomas Muster of Austria and American Jim Courier.

Ivanisevic admitted it had not been an easy win.

"Two easy misses by Novak in the seventh game of the third set swung the match in my favour. I struggled with my first serve, but then Novak is not an easy player to beat. He hit the ball deep and hard," he said.

'Debris may have caused Senna crash'

LONDON (R) — Debris on the Imola race track may have caused the crash that killed Brazilian Formula One driver Ayrton Senna in 1994, a British newspaper said Sunday.

The Sunday Times published a photograph showing a small piece of debris in the path of Senna's Williams car moments before he crashed into a wall at Imola's Tamborello curve during the opening laps of the San Marino Grand Prix.

The newspaper said the fragment may have come from a collision between a Benetton car and a Lotus at the beginning of the race.

"There, clearly in the path of the Williams, lies a piece of what is probably, judging by its colour, Benetton bodywork," the newspaper said.

It suggested that Senna, three times world champion, may have jinked the steering wheel to avoid the debris, hit a hump and lost control of his car. At the time of the crash, his tyre pressure was low, making the car vulnerable to humps, it said.

The newspaper said the picture, by a French motor racing photographer, had not been published before but had been given to the Williams Formula One team.

Team chief Frank Williams and five other people go on trial in Italy on Thursday charged with manslaughter over Senna's death.

An expert report compiled for the Italian investigators concluded that the car's steering column had snapped as a result of a faulty modification.

The Sunday Times also aired a theory that Senna may have blacked out moments before the crash, saying he had told a friend that he liked to hold his breath for the opening lap of a race because he believed this heightened his senses.

It said film from the small television camera mounted on his car showed that he was leaning sharply to the left just before the crash, suggesting that he might have lost consciousness.

Ruthless Hingis brushes off Majoli and brushes up her French

PARIS (AFP) — Ruthless Martina Hingis showed that friendship stays in the locker-room when she came out on the Coubertin Centre-Court to crush her pal Iva Majoli in straight-sets and reach the final of the \$480,000 WTA Paris Open Saturday.

The 16-year-old Swiss player crushed the fourth-seeded Croatian, one of her best friends on the women's tour, 6-1, 6-3 in 52 minutes and she will now face Germany's Anke Huber for the title on Sunday.

Huber earlier chalked up a surprise 6-3, 6-4 win over Hingis' doubles partner Jana Novotna.

Hingis, who became the youngest winner of a Grand Slam singles title when she triumphed at the Australian open last month, has now won all 18 matches she has played in 1997 — one of them a walk-over win in the Tokyo final against Steffi Graf.

And she admitted that she had been spending less time on court defeating her opponents than off court doing press interviews and brushing up her French.

"I've been working on my French all week in case I reached the presentation ceremony on Sunday," laughed Hingis, who is currently World No. 2 behind Steffi Graf and who speaks English, Czech and German.

"And all that can be harder than playing the tennis matches."

Hingis also made it clear she is a workaholic.

"I feel I have missed something when I have a few days off. Since Tokyo I have really been enjoying the tennis."

Majoli, 19, and a finalist 12 months ago, was full of praise for Hingis.

"She is so much better in every department of the game and she has so much confidence right now."

"She gives you no free points. Her serve is much stronger. And she has got great anticipation. Every shot you hit she is there."

"She is the most talented player I've ever seen," she said.

Anke Huber got off to a flying start against the second-seeded Novotna and never looked back.

Her 28-year-old opponent had won six of eight previous encounters against the third-seeded German player and was fresh from an excellent run at the WTA event in Linz last weekend where she reached the semi-finals.

But on Saturday Novotna was rocked back on her heels — the 22-year-old Huber kept her opponent permanently off balance with a cocktail of blistering returns, inch-perfect lobs and deft drop shots.

Novotna won only four points in the first four games, and then trailed 0-5 in the first set and 1-4 in the second. The Czech player, who had demolished French hope Mary Pierce in straight-sets 24 hours earlier and who finished last season so spectacularly with three consecutive tournament victories, became increasingly frustrated and earned one warning for ball abuse before finally surrendering.

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CALCULATE THE ODDS

Both vulnerable. South deals.

When North had the values for a spade raise, South played straight into a trap.

After the queen of clubs lead, declarer has to choose from three possible lines. The first is to cash the ace and king of trumps. If the queen drops, all is well; if not, declarer has to hope that the king of diamonds is singleton.

Somewhat better is to use the lone entry to dummy to take the diamond finesse. Should that win, declarer must cash the ace-king of spades next to try to drop the queen. If the lady doesn't come tumbling down, declarer must rely on a 2-2 diamond division and that the king will fall under the ace. Should the diamond finesse lose and the defenders are unable to negotiate a ruff, declarer must then try to pick up the trump queen.

Best of all is to run the jack of spades at trick two. If it wins, all is well — declarer can concede a diamond. If it loses, declarer captures any return, cashes the ace of spades, then re-enters dummy with the ten to run the nine of diamonds, repeating the finesse should it win. As you can see, this line succeeds when it secures the queen of spades.

NORTH		SOUTH	
♠ J 10 8	♠ Q 10 8 5 4	♠ A K 5 3 2	♠ A Q J 10 8
♥ A 8 7 6 5	♥ K 8 7 6 5	♥ A K 5 3 2	♥ A Q J 10 8
♦ A K 5 3 2	♦ A Q J 10 8	♦ A K 5 3 2	♦ A Q J 10 8
♣ A K 5 3 2	♣ A Q J 10 8	♣ A K 5 3 2	♣ A Q J 10 8

The bidding:

NORTH		SOUTH	
1♠	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	Pass

Opening lead: Queen of ♠

Study the North-South hands on this deal. How many lines are available to run in 12 tricks? Which is the best?

South was on the borderline of a demand bid but, since two suiters are notoriously difficult to describe when the auction starts with a forcing and artificial bid of two clubs, South elected to open one spade.

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Tuesday, 18/2, Die verlorene Landschaft - The Lost Landscape, 1994
Directed by Andreas Kleinert

Wednesday, 19/2, Burning Life, 1992 Directed by Peter Welz
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Gulf of Aqaba Environmental Action Plan — Jordan

The Environmental Department within the Aqaba Region Authority (ARA) has vacancies for the following positions to be filled immediately:

A Manager to coordinate the administrative, research and monitoring, education, revenue generation, enforcement and visitor use aspects of the Red Sea Marine Peace Park. He/She shall possess a university degree and must have demonstrated supervisory skills, be an excellent communicator and computer proficient. This ideal candidate will have a heightened appreciation for the environment. He/She will have the ability to work effectively with the public and private sectors and coordinate multi-organisational projects. Arabic and English language proficiency is a must.

A Coastal Zone Management Specialist, he/she will be hired to implement Coastal Zone Management (CZM) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) guidelines applicable to Coastal Zone Management. This specialist shall have the following professional qualifications and skills:

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- A minimum 3-5 years' work experience in management, planning, design or another professional occupation with application to CZM and EIA implementation.
- Ability to work effectively with business leaders as well as professionals in the engineering, planning and design professions; and
- Arabic and English language proficiency is a must.

A Computer Engineer: This candidate will have the following professional qualifications:

- University degree in computer/electronic engineering with experience in programming, database management, or related skills;
- A minimum 3-5 years' work experience in computer programming or data base management; Experience in GIS is an asset;
- Ability to work effectively with ARA Environment Department administrative, end technical persons;
- Demonstrated ability to teach technical applications related to computer programming and database management; and
- Arabic and English language proficiency is a must.

Positions to commence immediately on a yearly contract.

For further inquiries and submission of CVs not later than February 28th, 1998, contact:

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P.O. Box 21
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Suspects admit to killing Jordanian driver on Iraqi TV

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Two of three men accused of shooting dead a Jordanian official in Iraq in November, appeared on Iraqi television Saturday night and confessed to murdering another man in Syria.

The two, a Saudi and a Jordanian, were described as drug traffickers. They said they had committed another murder in December in Syria with the aid of a Syrian accomplice.

Saudi Zaban Battah Khdeij Freij Al Rueily, 27 and Jordanian Nasser Hantur Bashir Al Rueily, 23, were arrested in January in Iraq. They are accused of murdering on Nov. 11 last year, Jordanian embassy driver Omar Ahmad Ali Sobh, 40 on the Baghdad-Amman motorway.

In his confession, the Saudi said he and his two accomplices intercepted Sobh to steal his car which Syrian Trad Al Halabi, who is still at large, wanted to use for his smuggling activities.

Sobh "refused to give us the keys and I shot him once in the chest and twice in the head," the Saudi said, after admitting having entered Iraq illegally with his Jordanian accomplice to meet the Syrian. After the murder, the three alleged

traffickers sneaked over the border into Syria where they stayed 20 days before crossing into Lebanon to buy hashish and other drugs which they aimed to take to Saudi Arabia via Syria and Iraq, they said on television here.

On returning to Syria a week later, the three were stopped by a man, thought to be a Syrian security agent who asked to see their passports.

"I shot him with four bullets," said Nasser Rueily, who added that he and the Saudi had returned to Iraq leaving Halabi in Syria with the stolen car.

The two men were arrested near the Syrian border by Iraqi police sent to scour the area in the search for the killers of Sobh, said police chief Taher Jalil Habboush. Iraq has asked Syria, through Interpol to extradite Al Halabi to put him on trial, Habboush said.

He said Iraqi police would also cooperate with Syrian counterparts in the second murder.

The Jordanian driver was taking the diplomatic bag to Baghdad when he was murdered. The two suspects did not say what happened to the bag, which, according to Jordanian authorities, contained 250 blank Jordanian passports.

Britain urges Tehran to stop 'terrorism,' backs Iraq unity

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Britain urged Iran on Sunday to stop what it called terrorist activities and attempts to destabilise its wealthy Arab neighbours to ensure security in the oil-rich Gulf.

British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Jeremy Hanley also slammed Iraqi President Saddam Hussein for oppressing his people but expressed support for the country's territorial integrity.

Mr. Hanley, speaking to reporters during a visit to Abu Dhabi, said the European Union (EU) wanted to continue cooperating with Iran in economic and other fields unlike the United States, which has imposed a trade embargo against Tehran.

"Unlike the United States, we do not have a trade embargo with Iran and we continue to trade and we continue to talk to each other," he said.

"What we want is for Iran to recognise what we regard as peace. That country should not sponsor terrorism or threaten the stability ... it should not work to undermine the authority and peace in other nations," he added.

"If Iran recognises that it should live in peace rather than destabilise its neighbours, it will be good for Iran," he said. Iran has denied charges by its Gulf neighbours and the West that it is acquiring weapons of mass destruction and seeking to destabilise other states.

Gulf Arabs have repeatedly voiced concern about Iran's armament programmes, which include the development of long-range missiles and the purchase of three Russian Kilo-class submarines.

Relations between the two sides have deteriorated further because of an island dispute between Iran and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Mr. Hanley said Britain favoured a dialogue with the Iranians to "get them to recognise the need to come to the modern world, which means to discuss, talk and cooperate."

Asked about the sanctions against Iraq, he said he hoped food and medicine would reach the Iraqi people in line with an oil-for-food agreement reached between the United Nations and Baghdad in 1996.

"Our argument is not with the people of Iraq nor with the integrity and sovereignty of Iraq. We believe Iraq should stay Iraq," he said.

"But we believe the people of Iraq have been so badly managed by the leadership ... Saddam Hussein is our enemy, not the people of Iraq."

He said the international community was determined to maintain the sanctions on Iraq until it implements all Gulf war resolutions.

Mr. Hanley, who later flew to London, has also visited Dubai to discuss economic cooperation with the main trans-shipment centre in the region. He came aboard the royal yacht Britannia, which will sail for Qatar Sunday.

The minister had been due to attend talks between Gulf and European foreign ministers in Qatar but changed plans to fly back to London.

"I was required to fly back to London for a meeting with the foreign secretary, who will return from Hong Kong on Monday night," he said.

Ben Laden training new generation of militants — Egypt

CAIRO (AFP) — Osama Ben Laden, a Saudi dissident considered a major financier of militants in the Middle East, is training 1,000 new militants in two camps in Afghanistan, Egyptian security officials said Saturday.

In a report carried by the Egyptian news agency MENA, the security experts said the Afghan Taliban militia had reneged on a pledge made after it captured Kabul in September to expel all foreign militants living in Afghanistan.

"Osama Ben Laden is secretly running two camps — Badr One and Badr Two — where around a thousand

foreign Islamic militants are being trained in combat techniques," said the report.

It added that the camps were aiming to "prepare a second generation of Afghan Arabs charged with installing fundamentalist regimes in several Arab and Islamic countries."

The report said the camps in the Khust region near the Pakistani border had been closed down by the government of former Afghan leader Burhanuddin Rabbani.

Volunteers from many Arab countries flocked to Afghanistan in the 1980s to fight alongside the Mujahideen against the

'Turkish army chief to visit Israel'

ANKARA (AP) — Turkey's chief of military staff will visit Israel on Feb. 24, a Turkish daily reported Sunday. Ismail Hakki Karadayi, chief of military staff, will meet with military officials and with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the daily Sabah reported.

Ties between Turkey and Israel, bolstered by a string of cooperation agreements signed within the last year, have come under criticism from the Arab World and Iran.

Turkey's Islamist prime minister, Necmettin Erbakan, was among the critics before he came to power as head of a centre-right coalition in July but since has quit criticising Israel.

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Three-way clashes in Berlin

FLEEING FROM police, German skinheads dash for a train on Saturday following violent clashes between right-wing extremists, left-wing militants and police in Berlin.

The clashes came during a demonstration by left-wing militants who had turned out to denounce a far right gathering held under the slogan "Work for Germans first" — a reaction to the recent and continually spiralling unemployment in Germany (AFP photo)



Intelligence chief, others held in PNA torture death

NABLUS (Agencies) — Palestinian police arrested the head of Palestinian military intelligence in Nablus and three interrogators suspected of torturing a prisoner to death, a police official said Sunday. A military doctor was also arrested.

Captain Hani Ayad, head of Nablus military intelligence, was being held along with three of his interrogators Sunday, after an arrest warrant was issued by Palestinian Attorney General Khaled Kidrebeh and approved by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Capt. Ayad and his interrogators are suspected of beating Yusef Baba, 32, who died earlier this month in Nablus' Rafidiyah hospital after being held for a month without charge by Palestinian military intelligence.

His family has said Baba was arrested because he refused to sell a plot of land to Palestinian police.

It was not immediately clear why the doctor was arrested, but two nurses were arrested earlier in connection with the disappearance of Baba's medical file after doctors performed an autopsy. Mr. Kidrebeh refused to give names but said seven people have been arrested in the case so far.

Officials have said the autopsy found that Baba was tortured to death. Mr. Arafat ordered an investigation which led to the arrests.

Baba was the 11th Palestinian to die in detention since the start of self-rule in parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. His death prompted new criticism of the Palestinian National Authority's (PNA) human rights record.

Israel lodges protest

Israel has protested to the PNA over an alleged attempt by Palestinian security agents to recruit an Israeli bedouin soldier as a spy, military sources said on Sunday.

The soldier was arrested by Palestinian security agents on Dec. 9 as he visited relatives in Khan Yunis, a refugee camp in the autonomous Gaza Strip, the sources said.

According to Israeli authorities, police interrogated the soldier for several

hours in a bid to obtain information about Israeli military bases, operations and communications systems, they said.

The Palestinians also tried to pressure the soldier into spying for them, they said.

Relatives of the soldier in Khan Yunis called his family in Israel after he was taken away by police and they in turn informed the Israeli authorities. The army intervened with the joint Israeli-Palestinian coordinating committee for the Gaza Strip to obtain the soldier's release, the sources said.

Israel subsequently filed a formal protest with the Palestinian National Authority over the arrest and questioning of the soldier.

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Hebron settlers angry with government for refusing expansion

HEBRON (AP) — Jewish settlers were furious with Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai after he refused Sunday to give them permission to expand their settlements in Hebron.

"We are furious because we did not receive one building permit," settler Noam Arnon said after a meeting with Mr. Mordechai in Hebron.

"We demand the rights of the Jews in Hebron, and we demand all the sites immediately. ... We told him we feel humiliated in this situation."

Israel Radio said settlers could be heard shouting at Mr. Mordechai

and his officers from inside the closed meeting. Mr. Mordechai also visited the nearby Palestinian market and shook hands with vendors.

About 450 settlers live in Hebron in the midst of 120,000 Palestinians. Although they have money to build more houses, they have been prevented from doing so by the Israeli government.

The settlers had hoped that the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who they strongly supported, would reverse that policy and allow new building.

Mr. Netanyahu has said he supports

"natural growth" of the settlements, including in Hebron, but that has yet to translate into construction permits in Hebron.

The government has permitted the settlers to clear rubble from one ruined building in the downtown Avraham Avinu settlement in preparation for building a new apartment block there, but the settlers say they have not gotten the go-ahead for other building projects.

The settlers were doubly infuriated when Mr. Mordechai told reporters the Palestinians are honouring the agreement under which

Israel handed over four-fifths of Hebron to Palestinian control a month ago. Security arrangements to protect the settlers were a key element of the accord.

"To the best of my understanding there are no (Palestinian) violations," Mr. Mordechai said. "Everything that I checked confirms this, and the Jewish residents themselves did not raise problems in the area of security."

Mr. Arnon insisted there were serious Palestinian violations of the agreement, but did not say what they were.

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Yemeni tribesmen kidnap American

SANAA (AFP) — Tribesmen in eastern Yemen kidnapped an American oil engineer and demanded the government pay them more than \$2 million in compensation for confiscated land, authorities and oil officials said Sunday.

The American was abducted by members of the Murad tribe on Wednesday while working on a project in the mountainous Maarib region, around 280 kilometres east of the capital Sanaa, regional authorities said.

Hunt Oil Company officials denied reports one of their employees was kidnapped and said the hostage is an American who works for Dallas-based Halliburton Energy Services Company.

The kidnapped man's name was not immediately available and Halliburton officials could not be reached for comment.

Security forces have surrounded the area where the kidnappers are holed up while tribes there said President Ali Abdullah Saleh's General People's Congress (GPC) party had sent a delegate to ask the kidnappers about their demands.

The delegate arrived with leaders from area tribes.

The kidnappers are asking for \$2 million in cash, 500,000 Yemeni riyals (\$100,000) and five four-wheel drive vehicles as compensation for land in Sanaa which the government seized from the Murad chief, sources said.

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